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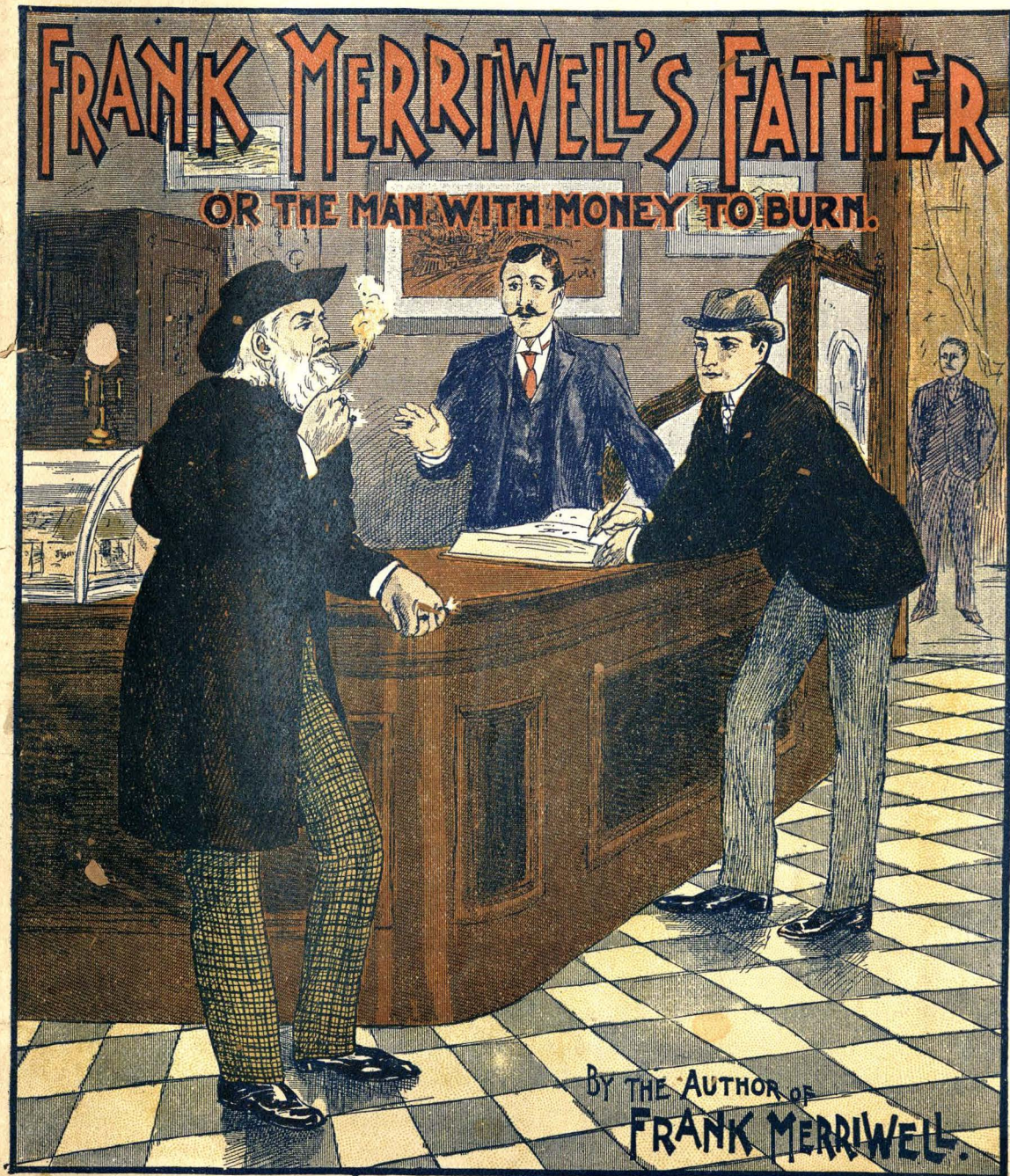
"An ideal publication for the American Youth"

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No. 139.

Price, Five Cents.

FRANK MERRIWELL'S FATHER OR THE MAN WITH MONEY TO BURN.



BY THE AUTHOR OF
FRANK MERRIWELL.

THE STRANGER CALMLY PROCEEDED TO LIGHT HIS CIGAR WITH A HUNDRED DOLLAR BILL.

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MAGAZINES AND NOVELS

"AN IDEAL PUBLICATION FOR THE AMERICAN YOUTH."

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FRANK MERRIWELL'S FATHER: OR, The Man With Money to Burn.

By the Author of "FRANK MERRIWELL.

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CHAPTER I.

A WORRIED MANAGER.

"Merriwell," said Parker Folansbee, the backer and reputed manager of "The Midland Dramatic Co.," which was playing Frank Merriwell's new four-act comedy drama, "John Smith of Montana," through the Middle West, "we're in a terrible scrape."

Folansbee was alarmed, he was distressed, he was agitated. To him it seemed that the situation was desperate.

The company, special scenery, mechanical effects, everything required to give a performance at the next town, was on the train—everything except one thing.

That one thing—the villain of the play!

Percy Lockwell, exposed in his rascally attempt to rob Folansbee at poker, shown up by Frank Merriwell in all his hypocritical crookedness, had deserted the company,

swearing to even the score with the young actor-playwright whenever he found the opportunity.

And there was no person not already assigned to an important part in the cast who was competent to play the villain of the piece.

It was eight o'clock in the morning, and the company was billed to play in Marshall that night, with Kansas City next on the list.

To Parker Folansbee it seemed that disaster stared them in the face, and he was amazed to note that Frank Merriwell did not seem at all disturbed.

"Don't worry, Mr. Folansbee," said Frank, as he settled himself comfortably in his seat, after hanging up his light top coat, from a pocket of which he extracted a notebook and pencil, as if he contemplated busying himself during the journey. "It'll be all right."

"All right!" exploded Parker, gaspingly.

The Title of True Blue No. 30 is "Clif Faraday's Disappearance."

"Why, what are you talking about? How will it be all right? Marshall is a good smart town, and its people are shrewd and intelligent. They will not be fooled into accepting the piece if somebody has to go on and read a part like that of 'Ben Haggerty,' the villain."

"We won't have anybody read it," said Merry, undisturbed.

"But you can't leave it out, and you can't——. I say, is there any way to double it? Perhaps that is what you are going to try to do? Perhaps that is what you are going to work at now?"

"No."

"Eh?"

"Not that."

"What, then?"

"An idea."

"For what?"

"Another play."

Folansbee gasped. He could not understand the coolness of Frank at such a moment.

"Another play?" he gurgled. "My dear fellow, you must be joking!"

Usually Parker Folansbee was languid and listless; now he was anything but that. The success at the very outset of "John Smith of Montana" had opened his eyes to the possibility of making a "barrel of money" with the piece, and the danger of the seemingly impending calamity overwhelmed him. Never before had he been so disturbed.

"Oh, no, I am not joking," assured Frank. "I have some ideas for a new piece that I believe will knock the spots off this one. I am getting those ideas down and preparing to work on them before they slip me. You know you can't tell what will happen to this piece."

That alarmed Folansbee more than ever.

"What are you talking about?" he spluttered, feeling like shaking the calm youth.

"Why should anything happen to this piece?"

I've put my money behind it; I've paid out good stuff for scenery and mechanical arrangements, and——"

"You will get every cent back—with interest. The piece is making money fast, and ——"

"That's just it. Now there is danger that the whole thing will go up on account of a nasty game of poker. I wish I had not played with Lockwell! I wish I had not let you into the game!"

"Mr. Folansbee!"

"Well, Lockwell would be with the company now, and——"

"He and his friend, Lawrence, would be beating you out of more money each night than the show could put into your pocket."

"But you might have told me quietly, without exposing them in that dramatic fashion and getting us into this scrape. Then we could have dropped Lockwell after we had provided somebody to fill his place."

"Mr. Folansbee, I presume you have played poker for a number of years?"

"Yes, since I was a boy."

"Exactly. You know the game well?"

"As well as possible, I believe."

"Just so. You are rather proud of your knowledge of the game."

"Oh, I only know how to play a square game!"

"That's all right. You are not a fool, and you do not like to believe that anybody has played you for a sucker."

"Well, I don't believe any man likes to think that."

"Of course not; and you can not make an enemy of a man quicker than by telling him he has been played for a sucker, even though he may know it is true. He resents it at once."

"I suppose that is right."

"If I had played the game through and left

Who was it Clif Declared Charmed Them All? True Blue No. 30.

without exposing the rascals then and there and had told you afterwards that you were being done out of your money, you would have resented it."

"Oh, no, I don't think—"

"I don't think; I know. You would have asked me why I didn't expose their little game. You would have informed me that you had played poker ever since you were old enough to hold the cards, and it was not an easy thing to fool you. You would have said that you could show me some points about the game. And you would have been hot under the collar to think that I had the nerve to hint that I could detect in one sitting that you had been cheated when you were not able to detect it in a dozen."

Folansbee felt that this was true, and yet the fact that the exposure had brought about such an unfortunate state of affairs was enough to make him bear a resentment against Merriwell. And now, when the loss of a principal actor seemed to threaten the company with no end of trouble, Merriwell calmly announced that he was getting together his ideas for another play—that he had foreseen that there might be trouble with "John Smith."

It was this final thought that troubled Folansbee the most. How long had it been that Merriwell had anticipated trouble?

He asked the question outright, with unusual bluntness, for him.

"Not long," answered Merry. "Not long, for it was but recently that I discovered the serious defect in the play."

"Defect?" gasped the backer. "Why, I didn't know—"

"Neither did I. That's just it. I've never seen the other play. I had never even heard of it when I wrote my piece."

"The other play? What are you talking about?"

"The one that has the saw mill scene in it similar to the great scene in my play."

Folansbee stared hard at Frank. After some moments, he asked:

"Is there such a play?"

"Yes," answered Merry, "there is."

"An old piece?"

"No."

"I thought not, for I have never seen it."

"Nor have I."

"Then how do you know—"

Frank reached for his overcoat and took a dramatic paper from one of the pockets.

"Here," he said, "here is the evidence."

He pointed to an article in the paper. Folansbee took the paper and read that article, growing more and more agitated. The piece went on to say that the manager of a certain play that had been making a big hit in the East had learned that the saw mill scene in his play, which was duly protected according to law, was being used in a new play produced by a cheap traveling company in Missouri. The manager averred that it was a direct and open steal from him, and that he should bring suit and attempt to protect himself and his property with the aid of the courts.

Folansbee dropped the paper and stared at Frank.

"By Georgel!" he exclaimed. "This is a pretty mess!"

"It is bad," nodded Frank; "but it may not be as bad as it seems."

"Why, here is a lawsuit in prospect."

"But you may get the best of it."

"Eh? Why, then—"

"I had the title of this play copyrighted some time before we met. You have applied for a patent to protect you on the saw mill business."

"Yes."

"You have not yet heard from the patent

office. If you are refused, then we are too late. But even then it is scarcely likely that we shall have serious trouble, unless we begin playing the large places, the cities, where this other show is likely to go. As long as we play smaller towns, of the class that we have been playing, it is quite probable this Eastern manager will consider us too small fry for him to bother with."

"But we are going to play in Kansas City."

"Yes."

"And Topeka."

"That's right, but the towns beyond that on our route are smaller; they are of the order that seldom get any of the big productions. Still they are large enough so that we may do a good, profitable business in them."

"That's right."

"Of course, I am sorry to know there is any question about the saw mill scene. I have never seen this other play, and I tell you now that I absolutely believed this saw mill scene new and original with me. It is an unfortunate coincidence that there should be a scene like it on the stage, but such things frequently happen, and we are not the first ones to bring out what seems to be a new and novel idea, only to find it has been used before. It frequently happens in literary work that two authors get hold of the same idea and work it out on similar lines at the same time, sometimes submitting their manuscripts occasionally to the same publishers."

"I've heard of such things, but I don't take much stock in them."

"I know from actual experience that such things happen. When I was in New Haven I became acquainted with an author. One day he read to me the first chapter of a juvenile story. It was about a Connecticut boy who became the possessor of the original Aladdin's lamp by purchasing it for ten cents at an auction of curios gathered by an old pro-

fessor who had died. On his way home with the lamp, which the boy had bought in order that he might have something by which to remember the professor, who had been kind to him, he sat down beside the road and started to rub up the old thing with his coat sleeve. Immediately there was a clap of thunder, a burst of smoke, and Aladdin's genie appeared before him. The story as conceived was to be humorous throughout, the boy getting into no end of scrapes through the possession of the lamp and with the aid of the 'slave of the lamp.' I was captivated by the idea. The author asked me what I thought of it. I told him it was simply great and so thoroughly original that it must be a great go if properly handled. I advised him to finish it and submit it to a certain New York publishing house, for whom I believed it was adapted. He did so, and it was promptly returned to him, without being read, as I am firmly convinced. Then he offered it to a rival concern, and it was accepted for publication in the leading juvenile magazine of this country, after which it was brought out in book form. But, before it was published in the magazine, before it had been announced, and almost immediately after it was accepted, another concern brought out a book on precisely the same lines. The resemblance extended even to the buying of the lamp at an auction. Of course the magazine publishers were convinced that the manuscript they had purchased contained an idea that had not been stolen, for they had accepted it before the book appeared, but the whole affair was most remarkable, and simply goes to prove that when such things occur it is not always certain that there has been a plagiarism.

Folansbee listened to this with unconcealed impatience.

"That's all right," he said; "but even if

Did You Ever Hear of a Gold Egg the Size of a Cocoanut—True Blue No. 30.

there has been no plagiarism in this case, we may not be able to defend our rights."

"That's true," admitted Frank. "We may have to shelve 'John Smith.'"

"What then?"

"That's why I am getting my ideas together for another play."

"But, good heavens! how can you take it so coolly?"

"What is the use to take it differently? I don't believe we can be stopped from playing this piece at once, even if this other manager tries to stop up, for you have the money to fight him, and we can go on gathering in the shekels for a time, but we may have to give it up in the end. Then, if I can have another play ready, why, we'll be strictly in it. See?"

"You talk about going on with this play as if there is no trouble about that now, but I don't see how we are going on with it to-night."

"Oh, that is a minor matter," assured Frank, coolly.

"It may be," fussed Folansbee; "but I don't look at it in that light. This business is wearing me out! It is setting my nerves on edge! I'll be a wreck!"

"You have been so much in the habit of taking things easily and not bothering your head over business that a matter like this breaks you all up. I want to call your attention to the fact that Lockwell did not play the part of the villain in the first place. You remember that, for it was by your orders that Dunton, a better actor, was taken out of the part to give it to Lockwell."

Folansbee shrugged his shoulders.

"Are you going to give me a dig about that?" he asked, petulantly. "Perhaps it was a mistake, but——"

"I am not going to 'give you a dig.' I speak of it so that I may call your attention

to the fact that Dunton can play that part now on short notice. Havener has notified him to be ready to play it again to-night. Havener did not consult you, for he——"

"He is the stage manager, I know. What do you want me to do—beg Havener's pardon for meddling?"

"Don't, Mr. Folansbee! You are very irritable. You are not expected to beg Havener's pardon. There was no time to consult you, and it was pretty certain you would not object to any kind of a shift to enable us to play the piece to-night."

"Oh, of course not! but I don't see how putting Dunton back into his original part will help matters. That will leave open the part he has been playing. We shall still be short a man."

"There is no one to play Haggerty but Dunton, who has been quite out of his sphere wrestling with German comedy. Dangerford, who has been playing the Yankee comedian, will do the German."

"Oh, yes!" came sarcastically from the manager. "That's all very well, but what are you going to do with the Yankee—cut him out?"

"We can't do that, for some of the best comedy scenes are between the German and the Yankee, and it is the comedy, as much as anything, that makes the piece go with our class of patrons. There must be a certain number of laughs to offset the thrills."

"Well, then, by Jove! I don't see that you have made any progress. Where's your Yankee?"

"There is a person with the company who has never found it necessary to fill a part. We have decided to make him do the Yankee."

Folansbee stared, began to gasp, fell back.

"You—can't—mean—me?" he palpitated.

Frank laughed.

Who said "I'd give a Ten Dollar bill to see Clif Faraday Make One Fool Break. True Blue No. 30.

"Oh, no," he assured. "I wrote the part from an original—from a character in real life, a friend of mine. The original character will play the part to-night."

Now Folansbee straightened up.

"Why," he said, "you can't mean——"

"Ephraim Gallup—yes. He was the original character from which I conceived the part. He has seen it night after night, till he knows it almost thoroughly. Some time ago I had an idea that he might be called on to fill the part and I gave him the manuscript to study in his leisure moments. He has committed the lines pretty thoroughly, but there he sits near the front end of the car, digging away at them now. He will do the Yankee character to-night, and I prophesy that he will do it out of sight. So you see there is nothing to worry over about the desertion of Lockwell. If he means to knock us out he has failed, and we will play in Marshall to-night, just as advertised."

CHAPTER II.

EPHRAIM CALLS FRANK TO ACCOUNT.

For some moments Folansbee was too dazed to say anything. Finally he exclaimed:

"Oh, say! that fellow can't act!"

"I don't want him to act," declared Frank. "All I want him to do is to go on the stage and not try to act. If he'll appear natural, I'll bet something he'll make a hit."

"Well, it's taking big chances."

"I fail to see it. We must fill a vacant part some way."

"Yes."

"Will you suggest any other way?"

"Can't."

"That's it. It's the only thing that can be done."

"Well," sighed Folansbee, with resignation.

tion, "I'm afraid they'll throw things at him."

"I am not afraid anything of the kind will happen," declared Merry, as he prepared to work. "Now just give me a chance to plug away at this other play. We may have to have it in a hurry."

"But you can't write it soon enough, can you?"

"I don't know about that. Good plays have been written in two or three weeks, but that does not happen very often. It didn't take me long to write 'John Smith,' you know."

"I doubt if you can repeat that job."

"Well, I don't know. The success of any play is always a matter of doubt till it is tried on the dog. The very thing that a manager may feel sure will be a great hit is likely to prove a fizzle. There is a big element of chance in every venture."

"And now, just as we have disposed of the element of chance in this thing, we're liable to be knocked out. I don't like it, if you do!"

Merry settled down and began looking over the notes in his book. He had collected a mass of material for the new-play, but it was in a maze of disorder, and it must be sorted out and put into shape before he could do anything with it.

During the most of the railroad journey Frank was hard at work over this stuff. It would have been difficult for any person but himself to have discovered that he had made any progress whatever, but he arranged much of it so that in his mind he could see the new play taking form. He could picture the climaxes of the various acts, and many of the best scenes were well worked out in his mind.

Marshall was reached in time for a late dinner at the hotel, and then the company was notified that they were to proceed at once to the theatre for a rehearsal.

There Was Only One Such Brooch in the World. Where did the Country Bumpkin get it? True Blue No. 30

The place had been well advertised. The paper of the play was to be seen everywhere, and the best windows were filled with the photograph boards.

Delvin Riddle, the advance man, was doing his work well, and Frank congratulated himself on securing such an agent, for Riddle had once been Merry's rival and had been worsted in an encounter.

Not all of the company was aware of the changes that had been made to fill the gap made by the disappearance of Lockwell, and there was no small amount of curiosity and anxiety over the matter.

Havener called the company together on the stage and talked to them a little, and then the rehearsal began.

Duntun was back in his old part, and he went at it with enthusiasm, which met with Havener's approval, for the stage manager believed in actors rehearsing as they expected to play. He could not tolerate dawdling at rehearsals and would not have it.

Of course Dangerford, in the part of the German comedian, was not letter perfect, but he did very well.

All were surprised when Ephraim Gallup came on to play the Yankee.

And Ephraim? He was all broken up. Right in the middle of his first speech he got twisted, and then he stopped and glared around.

"Look here, gol darn it!" he cried, "I wisht yeou folks would stop starin' at me zif I'd jest escaped from some dime museum! It jest breaks me all up!"

Havener encouraged Ephraim, but the poor fellow made an awful mess of the rehearsal. When it was all over Folansbee was in a complete state of collapse.

"He'll ruin the play to-night," the manager declared.

"I don't think that," said Frank, calmly.

"Look at the mess he made of a simple rehearsal!"

"Yes, but this 'simple rehearsal,' as you call it, was more trying for him than playing before a good house to-night will be."

"How do you make that out?"

"Simple enough. Ephraim knew everybody was watching him to see how he would do. He knew he was being watched by a lot of people who could act, and he realized that he was not an actor. It broke him all up. To-night he will not think of the actors and actresses who are watching him."

"But he will see a big audience out in front, and——"

"That will brace him up. Rehearsals are more trying than performances for a fresh actor. He feels that he is being criticised and laughed at, and it rattles him. The performance puts him on his mettle. Gallup will do all right to-night."

"Well, no one can hope so more than I."

If Frank had any doubts about it he did not show them. He sought Ephraim and encouraged the poor fellow as much as he could.

Gallup was sitting on a box in one of the dressing rooms, mopping his face with a handkerchief. He seemed weak and limp.

"It's no use, Frank!" he almost sobbed. "I can't do it!"

"Oh, yes you can!" laughed Merry, encouragingly. "You are all right."

"Nope; I know better. Why, I'm shakin' all over naow."

"You'll get over that."

"I may git over it jest naow, but good Lord! I'll kerflummix when I git reddy to come aout before all them people ter-night."

"This isn't the first time you have appeared before an audience. Remember the impromptu entertainment we got up when we were stranded. You——"

That Was Cannibal-Like to try to Chew Clif's Ear. True Blue No. 30.

"Why, I sung and played the trombone, but that was diffrent from goin' about an' tryin' to act."

"Don't try to act, Ephraim. Forget you are acting, and just appear natural. You'll get along all right."

"Frank, hain't there any way aout of this?"

"No way out of it, unless you refuse to go on, and leave me in the soup. Everything depends on you to-night."

Ephraim got up and placed a big hand on Merry's shoulder.

"Then I'll do it, b'gosh! if it kills me!" he declared. "I wouldn't do it fer anybody else in the world, but I'll do it fer yeou."

"Thank you, Ephraim. Be sure I appreciate it, and I will return the favor if I get a chance."

"Naow don't go to talkin' that way! Yeou returned it before it was done for ye. Wasn't yeou my friend at Fardale! Didn't yeou stand by me when they tried to haze the stufin' aout of me jest because I was a greenhorn from the farm! Yeou fit fer me in them days, an' I'm reddy to fight an' die fer yeou now!"

"You are a true friend, Ephraim. You do not forget."

Frank showed his feeling in his voice and face.

"I don't believe any of your old friends will ever fergit ye," declared the Vermonter.

"Oh, I don't know about that," answered Merry, a trifle despondently. "I am separated from them, and I am poor now."

"Look here, Frank Merriwell!" cried the country youth; "don't yeou ever git no notion inter yeour head that your friends was the kind that liked ye fer your money! If yeou do, yeou'll fool yerself—bad! Yeou didn't make friends that way. Yeou made 'em fer yerself, an' I'll bet they are jest as much yeour friends naow as they ever was."

"Well, perhaps so. I haven't heard from any of them in so long that I——"

"Whose fault is it?"

"What?"

"I say, Whose fault is it?"

"Why, I——"

"Have yeou let 'em know where ye be?"

"No, for I——"

"Then haow in thunder do yeou expect to hear from 'em? Haow kin they write to yeou if they don't know where to write? Look here, Frank Merriwell, I'm yeour friend, an' I don't like to say anything ag'inst ye, but there is one thing I must say."

"Let it come," smiled Merry, meekly.

"I don't think yeou have treated yeour old friends at college right in not writin' to them and lettin' them know anything abaout ye. There ye have it, by gum! straight from the shoulder. It's ten to one they're sayin' 'mongst themselves that they're disapp'inted in ye, as they didn't think ye'd fergit 'em an' go back on 'em so quick. They're blamin' yeou."

Frank was serious now.

"I never thought of that," he confessed. "You may be right, Ephraim—you may be right."

For a long time Ephraim had felt like speaking out about this, and now, pleased by the progress he had made, he kept on:

"Of course I'm right abaout it. An' yeou don't want them thinkin' you'd fergit them so soon. Some of them fellers was reddy to do anything fer yeou. They would hev fit fer yeou to the last gasp."

"You see it's this way," said Frank, feeling that he must justify himself in Gallup's eyes. "When I was down in the world—when I was nothing but an engine wiper, or a fireman, I did not feel like writing to them. I thought I would wait till I had crept farther up. And now I have waited so long——"

What were the Two Keepsakes Clif Gave in Exchange for One? True Blue No. 30.

"Yeou do not feel like writin' a tall."

"That's about it."

"Well, then, why don't ye send 'em some of the newspaper notices abaout yeou and your play: That'll let 'em know whut ye're doin' of."

"I will," nodded Frank. "I am glad you spoke of it, Ephraim. There is Hodge. I regretted leaving him to the temptations he must face, and I have not written him a line to keep him cheered up and on the right track. Ephraim, I feel that I have not treated Hodge right. What if anything has happened through my neglect? By Jove! I shall never cease regretting it if anything has happened! I'll let him hear something from me to-day."

CHAPTER III.

EPHRAIM'S DEBUT.

Ephraim Gallup, dressed and made up for the part he was to play, sat in a dressing room looking as if he were going to a funeral. He was the picture of abject misery and woe. His appearance was so comical that Harold Dangerford, who was to play the German comedy, and who had made Ephraim up, called others of the company to look into the dressing room and see him. They gathered laughingly about the door.

Gallup heard them laughing and looked up. At first he did not comprehend that they were laughing at him. When he did comprehend it, he did something that no member of the company, with the possible exception of Frank Merriwell, had ever known him to do before.

He got "mad."

Rising to his feet, he glared at them in a wrathful manner, looking unusually tall, as his tight trowsers were strapped up as far as they could be drawn, making his legs seem wonderfully long and thin.

"Look here," he growled, putting his hands on his hips, "be yeou folks larfin' at me?"

The way he asked the question convulsed them.

"If ye be," grated Ephraim, "yeou wanten hunt yer holes, fer I'm comin' aout an' smash up the scenery with the whole caboodle of ye!"

He thrust back his sleeves and started for them, blood in his eye.

At that moment Frank appeared and hastened to catch him by the arm, asking:

"What are you going to do, Ephraim?"

"Let me go!" shouted Gallup, furiously. "I'm goin' to fight, by thunder! I feel jest like fightin'! I want to fight! I've gotter fight! They've bin makin' fun of me, and I will fight!"

"Then fight with me, if you must fight," laughed Frank, restraining the excited Yankee youth with difficulty.

"No, it hain't yeou I want to fight, but them critters larked at me."

"Well, if you can make the audience laugh at you that is just what you want. You have started in well by making the company laugh. You have made a hit so quick."

"Wal, I'd like to make another hit—with this!"

Ephraim flourished his fist in the air and glared at the door. Frank was convulsed.

"Oh, do that on the stage!" he entreated. "Get right into your part after that fashion, and you'll be a winner. If somebody will get you mad just before you go on——"

"They want to look out for me if they do, b'gosh! I ain't to be fooled with."

Frank calmed the Vermonter down after a time, but he could not cheer Ephraim's drooping spirits. The poor fellow was frightened, and he admitted it.

WHAT A TWO CENT STAMP WILL DO—SEE LAST PAGE.

"You remember that song, Ephraim, that you used to sing at Fardale?" asked Frank.

"Whut one?"

"That one about milking the cow."

"Yes."

"Well, I want you to sing it to-night."

"Hey?" gurgled Ephraim. "On the stage?"

"Sure."

"Oh, geewhillikins! I can't!"

"Oh, yes you can."

"But the orchestry—they don't know northin' abaout it, an' so they can't 'company me."

"I've fixed that."

"Haow?"

"I hummed the tune for the piano player, and he has gotten hold of it so he will play some chords for you."

"But when be I goin' to sing it?"

"Any time that you get stuck in your lues and find a good chance. You remember the song. Just run it in some way. If you can sing it in the same queer way you used to, you'll bring the house down. You remember how the fellows used to have you sing it over and over, and never seemed to get tired of it?"

"Yes, but that was jest because I was such a Reub then, and——"

"You want to be just as much of a Reub as you can to-night. The tune is wonderfully catchy. Sing it just as you used to, and I'll wager you'll be the comedy hit of the evening."

"Wal, mebbe I will; but the pianner feller won't know when I'm goin' ter sing."

"I've told him to be on the watch for the song. You plunge right into it, and he'll be with you."

Ephraim would not promise.

The house was packed that night before it was time for the curtain to go up. Every-

thing promised a repetition of the success "John Smith" had made all along the line.

It was midway in the first act that Ephraim had to enter. It was necessary for Frank to almost push him on. He represented a Yankee who had come West to make his fortune in the mines, but was dreadfully homesick and completely dead broke.

Ephraim's knees buckled under him when he advanced onto the stage. It happened that he was quite alone. He was to speak a soliloquy, which explained why he was there, but he simply tottered out to the middle of the stage and glared around him in such a helpless, comical manner, while his mouth opened and shut, without a sound issuing from his lips, that a snicker ran over the audience. The snicker changed to a faint laugh. It grew louder as Gallup stopped and glared at the audience, became hearty, and then it swelled to a shout of merriment.

Ephraim stiffened up, looking indignant. Down to the footlights he stalked. He lifted one long forefinger and shook it at the audience.

"Naow, I don't see what in thunder yeou folks is larfin' at!" he exploded.

Then there was another shout, louder than before.

When it died down, Gallup observed:

"If I can't talk, I kin sing, by gum!"

Immediately he struck into the song, and the manner in which he sang it was simply inimitable. The words alone were not very funny, but the gestures and expressions that accompanied them, together with the catchy "hayseed" tune, struck the fancy of the listeners.

The song was as follows:

"As I was milkin' the kaow one night,
(So, boss! keep still, gol dern it!)
She switched her tail with all of her might,
(So, boss! hey there; havin' a fit?)

That Poor Little Boy Sadly Needed a Friend. He Found One in Clif. True Blue No. 30.

An' struck me a slap right 'crost the face,
 An' made me mad ernough to fight.
 I wanted ter kick her round the place,
 But dad he said it wouldn't be right.

CHORUS.

"I alwus mind what dad says ter me
 Sence fust he tuck me over his knee;
 But when I'm away 'way outer his sight,
 I do jest abaout as any boy might,
 Fer then I know that he'll never see
 That I don't mind what he says ter me.

"An' so, purty soon, when the old man went,
 (So, boss! keep still; I'll fix ye!)
 I tuck the stool an' made a big dent
 (Take that! Whoa, there! whoa, hish, gee!)
 Right in her ribs, where I knowed it fit.
 The darn fool kicked right back at me,
 But I won't tell you where her old foot hit;
 It's 'way round back where yeou can't see.

CHORUS.

"I alwus mind what dad says ter me
 Sence fust he tuck me over his knee;
 But when I'm away 'way outer his sight
 I do jest abaout as any boy might,
 Fer then I know that he'll never see
 That I don't mind what he says ter me."

When Ephraim concluded he was astounded by the roar of applause that came from the delighted audience. Men clapped their hands till they were tired and stamped their feet till half the audience fell to coughing from the dust that rose.

Ephraim backed off to the side of the stage and seemed on the point of making a break to get out of sight.

Frank was there, however, and he motioned for the Vermonter to repeat a stanza.

"Sa-ay," gurgled Gallup, speaking to Frank, "what is the matter with the blamed fools? They act like all possessed!"

"You've made a hit," whispered Frank. "Sing again."

"Why, I don't know no othier song."

"Repeat the same one. Go ahead. They

"Revenge, Deep and Deadly as the Sepulchre!" was Chauncey's Melodramatic Remark. True Blue No. 30.

won't let you go. Go back and bow and do it over. Go ahead."

"Wal, if this don't beat all natur!" fluttered Ephraim, as he sauntered back to the center of the proscenium and bowed extravagantly to the delighted people.

As the applause died down, he drawled:

"What's the matter with yeou folks? Didn't you never hear any good singin' before?"

He had caught their fancy, and they laughed at that, as if he had said the wittiest thing possible.

Then he repeated the song, and it was received almost as tumultuously as before, so that he had to give the chorus for a second encore.

By this time Gallup had recovered his confidence, and he could remember his lines, so he plunged into his part with a droll drawl and Yankee twang that pleased the audience immensely.

Frank had expected Ephraim would imitate the acting of the one who had played the part before, but he did nothing of the kind. He seemed to have some ideas of his own about the proper manner of doing the part, and he did it in his own style.

He told the story of his adventures since coming West to the German comedian, who came on to the stage after Ephraim's first speech, and he injected into it some queer expressions of his own, adding the finishing touch with the grimaces of his homely face and his droll gestures.

The audience seemed convulsed with merriment, and Harold Dangerford, who was doing the German part, was forced to turn his face from the footlights, so it might not be seen that he was ready to explode with pent up laughter, for the part made it necessary for him to seem dull and thick-witted.

In the wings the various members of the

company not on the stage were standing and watching Ephraim. They, too, had caught it, and some of them found it difficult to keep from shouting with laughter at the odd and original humor and wit the Vermonter injected into the part.

Frank Merriwell, amazed beyond measure, literally hugged himself as he watched his old friend sail in and "knock the spots" out of the part.

Parker Folansbee, on the front of the house, had heard from his position outside the door the first shout of laughter that filled the theatre. He pulled the door open and stepped inside, where he listened and watched while Ephraim sang the song. At the end of the song Folansbee unconsciously applauded with the delighted audience. But when Ephraim was fairly launched with the story of his adventures the manager became so absorbed that he permitted three boys, who had been hanging about the door and waiting for an opportunity, to slip past him without noticing them at all.

Roscoe Havener stood behind Frank in the wings and watched Gallup without uttering a word. He had permitted the Vermonter to fill the part at the suggestion of Merriwell and because there was no one else to attempt it. He had not been impressed with the probability that Gallup would make a success, and he feared the contrary.

The comedy scene was carried through to the end with no little originality on Ephraim's part, and the audience applauded again when the Vermonter came off.

Frank met his long, lank friend and shook his hand delightfully.

"Ephraim, you are all right!" he declared, with enthusiasm. "You have made the hit of the evening so far. I thought you would do all right, but I never dreamed you could do as well as that."

"Wal, I be gol dinged if it ain't easy to make some folks larf!" said Ephraim, who seemed as astonished as anybody. "I didn't know I could do it myself."

Havener had waited till he was satisfied the Vermonter had really made a hit. Now he spoke to Ephraim.

"You are to be congratulated," he said. "I was afraid you would overdo it when you found how much they were laughing at you, but you didn't. Now, don't get a big head over this and spoil everything before the play is over."

"Sa-ay," drawled the new comedian, "I've travelled araound with Frank Merriwell too long to git a big head over a little thing like this. By gum! I've seen him do things that jest made folks go crazy abaout him, an' yit he never got no swelled head, so I guess I ain't goin' off the hooks jest over this. Don't yeou worry, Mr. Havener."

Leslie Lawrence was almost the only one who did not congratulate Ephraim.

Lawrence was sore at heart, for the memory of the exposure of himself and Lockwell in their crooked attempt to cheat at cards still rankled in his bosom.

Lockwell had tried to induce Lawrence to leave the company, but Leslie refused, even though Percy declared his sudden departure must bring disaster to the organization.

Lawrence had "blowed" the money he won off Folansbee, and he did not feel like throwing up his job if there was a prospect that the show would keep on the road.

His greatest fear was that he would be discharged at the earliest moment that his place could be filled.

There was another thing he dreaded. He believed Merriwell and Folansbee would tell the story of that poker game to others, which would cause him to be regarded with scorn and ridicule.

ONE CROWD HATES THE OTHER LIKE "PIZEN"—TRUE BLUE No. 30.

One thing alone gave him a feeling of relief. Over and over he told himself:

"They cannot prove anything. They are not even certain that I cheated. Lockwell alone was detected."

Of course Frank was sure Lawrence had cheated, but the turn of the game had brought about the exposure of Lockwell, and Lawrence had escaped.

Even then Lawrence was not discharged from the company. It was not till Lockwell had tried to injure or kill Frank Merriwell in the sawmill scene of the play that he was forced to leave or be "fired." He chose to get out in a hurry of his own accord, but he had informed Frank that they would meet again.

Lawrence had fancied that Merriwell would "cut him dead," but he was surprised to find that Frank treated him with civility and politeness.

Folansbee was the one who cut him. This was particularly humiliating, as, up to the time of the fatal game of cards, he had seemed to enjoy the confidence of the manager more than any other member of the company.

Somehow Merriwell's forbearance and civility did not soften the resentment of the actor. He remembered that it was only a short time before that he had been playing leads in the company that Frank joined as a rank amateur. Now he was supporting the amateur, Frank Merriwell, the star of a play written by himself!

And Lawrence believed he could fill the star role far better than Frank.

Ephraim Gallup was one of Frank's staunchest and most steadfast friends. For that reason Lawrence was "sore" on him.

Ephraim's head was not turned by his reception as an actor. He went on to the end of the play, doing his part as well as he could,

and making it funnier than it had ever seemed before.

Frank understood the reason for this better than anybody else, for had he not written the part with the peculiarities of Gallup in his mind's eye? Ephraim fitted into it as the hand fits into a glove.

And the presentation of the play that night in Marshall was smoother and better than it had been previously.

The show still seemed to be on the straight road to success.

Ephraim Gallup was the hero of the evening among his fellow actors.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MYSTERIOUS MR. PHENIX.

The following day, as Frank was registering for the company at a Kansas City hotel, a striking looking stranger entered and walked up to the cigar counter near the clerk's desk.

The stranger had snow white beard and hair. The beard was well cared for, while the hair was so long that it fell on the collar of his coat.

His dark clothes were of broadcloth, the suit being new and spotlessly brushed, although it was plainly cut after a fashion to suit the taste of the wearer, rather than according to the style of the day.

On his head the man wore a wide-brimmed hat, while the boots on his feet were of shining patent leather.

Across the front of his vest a massive gold chain was strung. In his scarf blazed a large diamond, and there were diamond rings on his fingers.

The man's manner was quiet and calm. His face was almost as white as his beard and hair, but his eyes were sharp and piercing.

He was a person to attract attention anywhere.

When Taps Sounded Clif Faraday Had Disappeared. Where was He? True Blue No. 30.

From his pocket the unknown took a gold mounted and diamond studded cigar case, which was well filled with fine cigars. One of the cigars he slowly drew forth, closing the case and deliberately returning it to his pocket.

Next he took out a small gold cigar cutter, with which he snipped off the end of the cigar.

By this time the eyes of every person in the office of the hotel were fastened on the singular individual. There was that about him which attracted and held their observation.

Apparently he was utterly unconscious that he was watched.

He reached for the cigar lighter, but the alcohol in the little cup was exhausted, and so his effort to light his cigar with the aid of the lighter was unsuccessful.

Without the least show of impatience, he dropped the lighter back into place, put his hand in his pocket and took out a roll of bills as big as his fist.

His next act caused every person watching to give a gasp of amazement.

From the outside of the roll he pulled a crisp hundred dollar bill. With this the stranger calmly proceeded to light his cigar. He thrust one end of it into the flame of the little lamp, serenely watched it catch fire, and then held it to the end of his cigar, puffing away deliberately till the weed was well lighted.

The half-burned bill he tossed on the floor, placed his foot on it to extinguish the flame, turned about and walked with a dignified air out of the office, never once saying a word or appearing to observe anybody in particular.

There was a hush when he was gone. Then the clerk leaned over the desk and stared down at the half-burned bill.

Somebody exclaimed:

"Well, wouldn't that kill you to death!"

Jabez, of the Snakyeyes, says "I'll Dew It!" See True Blue No. 30.

Then there was an excited stir.

"Fake!" exclaimed a commercial traveller, laughing. "It was well done, though. That bill really looked like the genuine stuff."

"It was counterfeit, of course," puffed a fat man.

Frank stooped and picked up the half-destroyed bill. Some of the witnesses of the little scene came forward and gathered round him. Merry examined the bill closely.

Then he added to the sensation by saying, in a tone of absolute conviction:

"The bill was genuine!"

"What?"

Now there was excitement.

"There is no doubt about it," asserted Merry. "It is on the First National Bank of this city, and is the exact duplicate of the one I have here. If it is counterfeit, I will forfeit my reputation for common sense."

He had taken another bill from his pocket and was comparing what remained of the half-destroyed one with it.

Others examined the half-destroyed bill, and it was not long before nearly all became convinced that it was genuine.

Then came the question:

"Who is this man who lights his cigars with hundred dollar bills?"

"I've heard of him," declared a young man. "He 's stopping at the Midland."

"What's his name?"

"He is registered as 'Mr. Phenix of Arizona.' He's been doing all sorts of queer things like throwing five and ten dollar gold pieces out of his window to see newsboys scramble for them. He throws them out by the handful. He tipped a bellboy fifty dollars for carrying his grip to his room when he arrived."

"When did he arrive?"

"This morning. That's why you haven't

heard about him from the newspapers. The reporters have been chasing him."

"What have they found out about him?"

"Not much. He refuses to talk, but it's certain he's got plenty of rocks."

Kansas City had been rather dull for some time. It needed something for a sensation, and it seemed that something had arrived at last.

"That bill is only half destroyed," said one of the little throng. "It will be redeemed. What are you going to do with it, young man?"

"I shall keep it and return it to Mr. Phenix," answered Frank.

"What right have you to keep it?"

"I picked it up."

"Yes, but——"

"Do you want to keep it?"

The way Frank asked the question caused a laugh at the expense of the interested inquirer.

"Why—why, no—but I—I thought it would be a good thing to—to leave it with the clerk here," stammered the confused man.

"You are very interested, sir," murmured Merry, holding the bill in his hand. "Really, I think you will be the proper one to take charge of it. Now, don't refuse. I think you had better. Here, take it."

He pressed the remnant of a bill into the man's hand, closing the fellow's fingers down over it, and then turned and picked up the pen to resume registering for the company.

The man opened his hand and stared.

The half-burned bill was not there!

"Hey!" he gasped. "It's gone!"

Frank serenely began writing.

"Here!" cried the man, catching him by the shoulder; "what did you do with it?"

"You are very annoying, sir," said Merry,

That was a Splendid "Make-Up" Cliff had on His Mission of Secrecy. True Blue No. 30

as if a bit impatient. "What is the matter with you?"

"What did you do with it?"

"With what?"

"That bill."

"Gave it to you."

"Never! You——"

"I call these gentlemen to witness that I placed it in your hand. You see I haven't it."

Frank held up his empty hands.

"It's a cheat!" cried the man. "Everybody here who saw Phenix, or whatever his name is, drop that bill has an interest in it. It doesn't belong to you any more than it belongs to the rest of us."

"Admitted. That's why I gave it to you to keep. I am a stranger. I presume you are known here."

"But you didn't give it to me! I haven't got it!"

"And you didn't drop it?"

"No! Now you——"

"You are sure you haven't it anywhere?"

"You bet! Young man, you're altogether too flip. Just you give it up, or——"

"You must have it. Perhaps you tucked it away somewhere. Now, it might be in this."

Frank reached out and took hold of a locket that dangled on the man's watch-chain. It was a large, snowy locket. Merry opened it a bit, and there, closely packed inside it, was the half-burned bill. Frank quickly drew it out after having exposed it snugly packed in the locket.

The man was astounded and confused.

"Why—why—" he gasped.

Frank interrupted him with a light laugh.

"Of course you didn't mean to conceal it," he said, significantly. "You simply tucked it in there by accident."

"But I never!" roared the man, which caused Frank to laugh all the more.

"A clever bit of legerdemain," commented a spectator. "It was really very good."

"You will see something better than that if you attend the performance of 'John Smith of Montana' to-night," declared Merry, not missing the opportunity to advertise the play. "As for this half-burned bill, perhaps I had better keep it now."

Of course Frank had performed a deft feat of magic, and the man to whom he had pretended to give the remnant of a bill had not received it at all. It had remained in Frank's possession all the time.

"If you keep it——" began one.

"I shall do as I said, restore it to Mr. Phenix at the first opportunity," promised Merry.

"Then here is your opportunity!" excitedly palpitated the clerk. "Here comes Mr. Phenix!"

The man who burned money was just re-entering the office.

CHAPTER V.

A REMARKABLE MAN.

Of course everyone turned and stared at the remarkable stranger, but he seemed utterly unconscious of the fact that he had attracted so much attention. He sauntered into the office with the careless air of a man who has plenty of time on his hands and not a care in the world. There was something awe-inspiring about his pallid face and piercing eyes. It was plain enough that he was a man who had seen trouble and sorrows, but it was also plain that he had determined to put all unpleasant memories of the past from him.

Somehow to Frank Merriwell there seemed something familiar about this man. It seemed to Merry that they had met before, but, although he had an excellent memory,

he could not recall the time or place. This being the case, Frank decided that he must be mistaken, for had he ever before seen such a singular person the recollection of such a meeting must have come easily to him now.

At once Frank stepped forward from the little group in front of the desk and advanced to meet the stranger.

"Sir," he said, politely, "I believe this belongs to you."

He held out the half-burned bank note.

The mysterious man from Arizona paused and glanced carelessly at Merriwell's offering. His face remained grave and immovable.

"I do not want it," he said. "I threw it away."

That voice! It sounded like a familiar echo to Frank; it stirred him strangely. He wondered that he should feel a thrill of agitation run over him.

It required an effort for Merry to remain calm and undisturbed in appearance. He had faced the most deadly perils without a tremor, but now in the presence of this man a queer thrill was creeping over him and giving all his body a quivery feeling.

"It is not destroyed so that it cannot be redeemed," said Merry, with forced calmness.

"Never mind," came softly from the lips of the strange man. "It is worth nothing to me."

"It is worth a hundred dollars to anybody."

"Well, what is a hundred dollars!" came with something like mild contempt from Mr. Phenix.

"It is considerable money."

"Money! I have money to burn—and I burn it! Don't trouble me. You picked it up?"

"Yes."

"Keep it. It is yours. It served my purpose. I lighted my cigar with it."

What was that Matter Clif Would have Let Drop, if it Had not been for Bessie? True Blue No. 30

At this there was a groan of dismay from the man who had hoped to obtain a share of the money when the bill was redeemed.

Frank hesitated. A sudden feeling of anger came upon him. What right had any man to burn money to light his cigar with when there was so much poverty and suffering in the world! It was a crime, and Frank did not hesitate about expressing his convictions on that point. He now showed no fear of the man.

"Sir," he said, almost icily, "when I have redeemed this bill I shall see that its value is put to good use. I shall distribute the money obtained for it among the poor of this city."

The stranger from the Southwest simply lifted his eyebrows the least bit.

"You are at liberty to do as you like with it," he said. "I am sure it is nothing to me."

He made Frank think of Monte Christo as he stood there, his hair white, his face bloodless, his eyes burning. He was Monte Christo come to his fabulous fortune after years of imprisonment in the dungeon depths of Castle d'If. He was a man restored to life after being buried for long maddening years in the terrible darkness and silence of a living tomb.

This thought shot through Merry's brain, and then Frank retorted to the stranger's last words:

"It should be something to you, sir."

The man seemed about to turn away, but Frank's tone and manner checked him.

"Why should it be anything to me?" he asked, still unruffled.

"It should be something to any man who knows there is sickness and poverty in the world and yet heedlessly throws his money away and burns it to light his cigars," came boldly from the young playwright and actor.

Mr. Phenix thrust his left hand into his

trowsers pocket, took a long pull at his cigar, lowered it and looked at it contemplatively.

"A poor weed," he muttered, as if forgetful of everything else. "In all Kansas City it is impossible to get a good cigar."

Frank could scarcely repress his impatience. His face flushed, for it seemed that the man was taking pains to ignore him and his words.

"It is a crime for any man to light a cigar with a hundred dollar bill," he said, directly. "A hundred cents would keep some poor wretch from starvation to-day. The man who burns good money when there is so much want in the world should be arrested and imprisoned, and his money should be taken from him and given to charity."

"That is your idea," gently said the man from Arizona. "You have a right to your views. I believe every man has a right to his views, and it is a foolish person who will quarrel with him about them."

This was not what Frank expected or desired. It seemed remarkable to him that the stranger should remain perfectly unmoved in the face of his plain language.

"If you have so much money, sir," he said, warmly, "it will not be difficult for you to find a way to bestow it upon the needy who are worthy."

"Ah, but that would cause me trouble."

"Yes."

"And it would take time."

"Is your time so valuable?"

"Yes. The best part of my life is gone. I have not many years to live now, and every moment is valuable. I propose to enjoy it to the fullest extent. My time is my own, and I shall use it for my benefit alone. I care nothing for others. My money is my own, and I shall do with it as I see fit. No man ever gave me money when I needed it, and I have needed it as sorely as ever human

being could. My turn has come, and I let nothing turn me from the full enjoyment of it."

The self-confessed selfishness of the man was repugnant to Frank, and the youth's lips curled with scorn.

Looking at Frank with those piercing eyes, it seemed that Mr. Phenix read his very thoughts, for he said:

"All human beings are selfish. They may try to conceal the truth under a mask of pretended generosity, they may make a profession of caring for their fellow men, but they are hypocrites, and at heart they are supremely selfish. Don't tell me this is not true. I know. I am older than you. In me you see a man who is not afraid to let the world know just what he is at heart. I am not a hypocrite, for I do not pretend to generosity and nobleness. I am willing that all men should think me selfish. I am willing they should think anything they choose about me."

He puffed at the cigar, flicked a bit of ash from it, and went on in the same calm, even manner:

"This morning I saw some newsboys squabbling under my window at the Midland. I opened the window and threw a handful of gold to them. They fought over it like young tigers. I was amused. People at the hotel thought I was generous. When I found they entertained such ideas, I told them they were mistaken, that I threw out the money by way of providing a few moments enjoyment for myself. I informed them that I should not have thrown out a silver quarter if I had seen a starving beggar under the window, even though the wretch were weak and tottering from lack of nourishment. That would have cost me an effort, and I should have derived no amusement

from it. I pay for what amuses me, but for nothing else."

More and more was Frank astounded by the man's words. He had not dreamed that any human being could so calmly confess such utterly heartless disregard for all humanity and so brazenly boast of his debasing selfishness.

It was necessary for Frank to hold his indignation firmly in check, but his handsome face betrayed his feelings clearly.

Stronger and stronger became the feeling that sometime he had somewhere met this man. It almost seemed that he could grasp the time and place, but still it evaded him, as, at times, a perfectly familiar name will evade the memory of everyone. It was provoking, and Frank was annoyed.

"You speak frankly enough," Merry said; "but I am not willing to believe that even you are as bad as you would have others think."

"Bad?" said the man, gravely. "Is that the way you regard it? It makes no difference to me, young man. I do not care in the least whether people think I am bad or not."

"Then you must be deranged—you must be mad!"

Mr. Phenix started the least bit, as if stung at last.

"I do not like those words," he said, coldly.

"What words?"

"'Deranged' and 'mad.' Do not use them again in my presence! Do you understand?"

His eyes bored Frank through and through.

"Do you understand?" he repeated. "You are not to use those words—or any synonymous words!"

It was a command.

The eyes of the remarkable stranger literally glittered. Deep down in their dark caves was a glare as of a hidden fire, but his face was cold and unmoved as marble.

Those Fellows that Tried to Bite Got Badly Bitten. See True Blue No. 30.

And somehow it seemed to Frank that this man had a right to command; somehow it seemed to Frank that he must obey. It was a remarkable feeling, and he could not account for it.

"Very well, sir," he said, with enthusiasm that astonished himself; "I will not use them again."

The man flung aside the cigar.

"It is well," he murmured. "There are words some men do not care to hear. Those words I do not care to hear."

His manner changed. Of a sudden he reached out his hand and placed it on Frank's shoulder. He stood thus for a few seconds, looking at Merry for the first time with a show of interest.

"I like you," he finally said. "I don't know why, but I like you. No person has ventured to speak to me as you have—no person has ventured since—since—"

He hesitated, seeming to grope a moment for the right expression. Then he finished: "Since I came back into the world."

A queer feeling ran over Merriwell.

"Why," he exclaimed, almost breathlessly, "have you—have you been—out of the world?"

"I have," declared the man. "I was a man in the prime of life when I went out of the world. You see me now. I have come back an old man. But I brought a fortune with me, and I have money to burn."

"I shall spend the rest of my life burning it."

"You could spend the rest of your life in a far better manner. You claim you are utterly selfish, and you will spend money only in procuring pleasure for yourself. A man in your place should find the greatest pleasure in spending his money to aid the poor and needy. It should be a delight to him that he is able to relieve suffering and want.

I think you are seeking pleasure in the wrong direction. Many a man is generous because it gives him the greatest pleasure to be so."

"And that is one form of selfishness," asserted the singular man. "If he did not enjoy being generous, he would not be generous, and so he is selfish in his generosity."

This was a remarkable argument, and Frank was thinking how he would meet it, when, all at once, the man asked:

"What is your name?"

"Frank Merriwell."

"I thought so!"

"Eh? You thought so?"

"Yes."

"Then you have seen the advertising?"

"What advertising?"

"Of my play."

"No, I do not think I have."

"But why—why should you think my name was Frank Merriwell?"

"Because I did think so, that is all. Something told me that was your name. You are a fine looking young man—a youth any father should be proud to call his son."

These words impressed Frank strangely.

All at once, with singular abruptness, the man turned away.

"Are you going?" asked Frank.

"Yes, I am going. We shall meet again."

"This money——"

"Keep it. Do anything you like with it. Give it to the poor, if that suits you best."

The man paused.

"One moment."

"Come to the theater to-night and see 'John Smith, of Montana,'" invited Frank. "You shall have a pass."

"A pass! Young man, I will come, but I do not want a pass. If I choose, I can buy every seat in the house and never know I have spent the money. What is this 'John Smith, of Montana?'"

"It is my play."

"Yours? You wrote it?"

"Yes."

"I will come."

Then Mr. Phenix left the office. As he passed through the door he was heard to mutter:

"A son any father might be proud to call his own!"

CHAPTER VI.

FACING A "FROST."

"Well, you did have nerve to talk to him like that!" exclaimed one of those who had listened to all that had passed. "Why, I believe the man is daffy! Surely he is not right in his upper story."

Then they fell to discussing in an animated and rather excited manner the strange man from Arizona.

Frank thrust the half-burned bill into his pocket and finished writing the names of the company on the register. The ladies were in the parlor, while Gallup, Havener and Dangerford were attending to the getting of the special scenery into the theater. The other members of the company were around the hotel, but it happened that none of them were present in the office at the time of the strange interview between Merriwell and Mr. Phenix.

The clerk assigned the rooms, and Merry immediately went up to his, after speaking to the ladies and telling them they would be shown to their rooms by a boy.

Alone in the room, Frank paced up and down like a caged tiger, an expression of perplexity and study on his handsome face. His brows were knitted in deep furrows and his hands were clenched. Something within him was stirring as if a forgotten chord had been touched.

"Where have we met?" he muttered. "When did we meet? I know I have seen

him before! Something tells me that. There was something familiar in his voice! There was something familiar in his gestures and movements! But his face—it is strange to me."

That marble face seemed there before him. He could see it almost as plainly as he had seen it as he stood and talked with the mysterious man who claimed he had come back into the world after being out of it many years.

Something set Frank to thinking of his boyhood. It seemed that something about this strange man brought those thoughts to him. He remembered his sweet-faced mother, never strong, ever kind and loving. All through the years the memory of her had been the saddest and sweetest of all things to him. He thought of the days when he had stood by her knee, and she had told him of his father, who was far away somewhere in the great West, seeking to make a fortune amid the mines.

His father——

"Merciful heavens!"

An electric shock ran over Frank Merriwell. He paused in the middle of the floor as if turned to stone; he stood there with a look of unutterable amazement on his face. Finally, his lips moved, and he hoarsely muttered:

"That man is my father!"

The conviction had come to him at last. He remembered how strangely he had felt as he stood before the unknown from Arizona. He remembered how he had felt that the man was known to him. He remembered that there had been something familiar in the man's face, gestures and voice. And, above all, he remembered that when the man had spoken commandingly he had felt that he must obey.

"That man is my father!"

"By the Blood of Bruce, It's Not Him," Gawked McPatrick. True Blue No. 30.

Frank repeated the words. He had last seen his father shortly after leaving Fardale Academy and starting on his "educational travels" in company with his lamented guardian, Professor Scotch. In Arizona, whither Frank had gone in search of a mine, the chart to the location of which was traced on the stone of a ring that had come into Merry's possession in a remarkable manner, he had found his father, at that time the rightful owner of the mine.

Even at that time his father had been greatly changed. Surrounded by enemies, who had endeavored to rob him, once buried alive in his own mine by his bitterest foe, Mr. Merriwell had seemed somewhat unbalanced mentally. He had triumphed at the time over his enemies, but had explained that it was necessary for him to disappear from sight if he wished to live, as he was certain his enemies would destroy him eventually if he came out into the open.

He had disappeared. For a long time Frank heard nothing of his eccentric parent, and he wondered if his father were living or dead.

At last, while Frank was at college, a man had appeared and sought to lure him from the path of uprightness and honesty. Of course the attempt had been a failure, and, in the end, Merry discovered that the man had been sent on this singular errand by Frank's own father, who wished to learn what sort of a youth his son had become. The man had departed, after saying that Mr. Merriwell would be delighted to know that his boy was so thoroughly upright and unswerving, and, from that time to the present, Frank had heard nothing of his eccentric parent.

And now he believed that the man had suffered, and it seemed that suffering had turned his brain.

Frank thought of the man's singular words on learning the name of the youth who had spoken to him so plainly. Mr. Phenix had declared that he believed the youth to be Frank Merriwell, but had not explained why he thought so.

Had Frank's father recognized him? If so, why had he remained silent—why had he failed to speak out and make himself known?

Frank was excited now, more excited than he had been for a long time.

"I must find out!" he cried. "I must talk with him! I must tell him that I know him!"

Out of his room he dashed and down stairs three steps at a stride.

As he reached the main floor, he nearly ran against Parker Folansbee.

The manager was looking anxious and depressed.

"Ah!" he exclaimed. "Mr. Merriwell, I wish to speak with you."

"I am in a hurry," panted Frank. "Another time——"

"Just a moment, Mr. Merriwell. It is about business."

That stopped Frank. This man had placed his money behind the company, and it was Frank's duty to listen to what he had to say.

"Go on," urged Merry, rather impatiently.

"I am afraid we will not have a very good house to-night, or while we are here," said Folansbee, hesitatingly.

"Why, how is that?"

"No advance sale at all. I think we made a mistake in striking a city like this so soon."

"But it seems to me there should be some sort of an advance sale. Isn't there anything sold?"

"Not a single seat."

"That is strange."

"It is remarkable."

"I do not understand it. What is the cause? Do you know?"

WHAT WAS MEANT BY A "BLIND PIG?"—SEE TRUE BLUE No. 30.

"I have thought of several things."

"Have we been properly billed?"

"Yes; our paper is up and our photograph boards are in the best windows."

"And no advance sale? How about the newspapers? Has Riddle done good work as press agent?"

"He has done well enough, but I have found there is a report afloat that may have caused people to hold aloof."

"Ah! Now we are getting at it!"

For the moment Frank forgot about the wonderful discovery of his father. He was interested in the fate of their venture into Kansas City, where they were to fill three nights left by another company that had gone to the wall. Of course, the show had been put in there in a hurry, but Riddle had prophesied that they would be "dead sure winners," and they had come there with great hopes. Now it seemed that they were to receive a set-back.

"What is this report you speak of?" asked Frank.

"A story that this is a fake show and will be closed up here by the manager of another show on whose rights we are trespassing by using a scene from one of his plays."

"Is that it? Well, I wonder how such a yarn was started."

"I have been trying to find out, and I think I have discovered."

"You have?"

"Yes."

"Tell."

"A certain individual has been here ahead of us."

"Name him."

"Lockwell."

"Ha!"

"The man at the box office told me Lockwell had been inquiring about our show."

"Then he has done everything possible to hurt us, and, being an actor, he knew just how to go about it to do the most harm. It is too bad!"

"Hang the fellow!" drawled Folansbee, with a show of anger. "I'd like to wring his neck!"

"It is plain he means to keep his word."

"Eh? What word?"

"He promised that I should hear from him again. I have. But it may not be as bad as you fear. Our company is here, and we shall play. I do not believe we shall be disturbed."

"What's the odds if we don't get houses? I could not get in here at the usual thirty-seventy; I had to give the manager a lump sum for the three nights, and take our chances. The manager will be all right if we do not draw ten persons, for he has the money in his pocket. I am the one who will get it in the neck."

"We'll see what can be done, Mr. Folansbee."

"What can be done?"

"That I cannot tell now, but we may find a way of working up business."

"We are up against some good things at the other theaters, and that makes it worse. Jefferson is playing at the——"

"That will make no great difference with us. Jefferson plays first class, while we play to popular prices."

"But Jacob Litt has a big spectacular affair running in town, and is packing his house every night. The manager of the theater where we are to appear told me Litt had killed the other show whose dates we are filling."

Frank could see that the situation was really serious, and he felt that it was his duty to do all he could to bring out the people to see "John Smith." But what could he do? That was a question not easily answered.

And this had come about to perplex Frank just when the discovery of his father had diverted his mind for the time.

But business was business, and Merry felt that it was his duty to give his time to the show. However, he felt that he must see the mysterious Mr. Phenix without delay.

"Mr. Folansbee," he said, "I have something I wish to attend to just now, but I will return as soon as possible and try to devise some scheme for getting out a house to-night."

Folansbee shook his head.

"Go ahead and attend to your business,"

That was a Convenient Crack in the Floor to which Cliff Applied His Eye—Tip Top No. 30.

he said; 'but we are up against a frost here, and all your scheming will work no good.'

CHAPTER VII.

A VALUABLE SUGGESTION.

Frank went to the Midland Hotel. Everywhere he sought for Mr. Phenix, but did not find the mysterious man.

At last, realizing his duty would allow him to waste no more time in the hunt that day, he turned from it.

To the theatre he went. The box office was open, and the man was there to sell tickets.

He had not sold any.

Frank talked with him, and heard what he had to say. Of course, the man in the box office was not greatly disturbed because of his failure to make an advance sale, for he knew the manager of the theatre had received the money that was to pay him for the rent of his house three nights, and he would be all right under any circumstances. The ticket seller politely expressed regret that the prospect looked so unfavorable, assuring Frank that the manager had done his part thoroughly according to the terms of the agreement.

Merry was galled. It was provoking to know that Percy Lockwell had been able to obtain such a mean revenge. And Lockwell had done his work thoroughly, for Frank learned that the manager of the theatre expected "John Smith" would be checked the very first night by the owner of the play on whose rights it was said Frank's piece infringed.

"Where is this owner?" asked Frank.

"I don't know, sir."

"Has he appeared here?"

"No."

"It is rather remarkable that neither I or Mr. Folansbee has heard anything from him."

"It does seem strange."

"If he were contemplating interfering, it strikes me he would first notify us through his lawyers that we were infringing on his rights and doing him damage."

"I should think that would be the usual mode of procedure."

"Nothing of the kind has appeared."

"No?"

"And so I take no stock in this report. It was circulated by Lockwell solely for the purpose of damaging me."

"Lockwell has something against you?"

"Yes. He was with the company."

"And was released?"

"No; he found it expedient to skip."

"Ah! Trouble?"

"Exactly."

"Serious?"

"Rather."

"To what extent?"

"Pretty near attempted murder."

The box office man whistled.

"This was pretty serious," he said.

"Yes. The fellow is a thoroughbred scoundrel. I did not like him the first time I saw him, but consented to take him into the company because Mr. Folansbee, who knew him, desired it. Now, what did the rascal do? After Folansbee got him into the company, he set about robbing him."

"Folansbee?"

"Yes."

"That was gratitude!"

"Percy Lockwell has no sense of gratitude. I detected him at his tricks and exposed him. Then he hated me."

"I see."

"In the saw mill scene, at the end of the third act, I am bound to a log that is being cut by a saw. The villain does this, and Miss Bellwood, the ingenue, breaks down the door, rushes in and saves me just before the saw cuts into my head."

"That is good stuff."

"Lockwell was playing the villain. He bound me more firmly than usual."

"Ha; I begin to understand his trick! Good gracious! You don't mean to say he tried to murder you right before the eyes of the audience?"

"That was just what he attempted."

"But—but the man must have been crazy!"

"He believed it would seem like an accident."

What Was the Secret Entrance that Clif Found Out? True Blue No. 30.

"Oh, I understand."

"When Miss Bellwood breaks down the door, the villain meets her, and they have a brief struggle. She breaks away from him and sets me free."

"On the night you speak of—what happened then?"

"He tried to hold her long enough for the saw to get in its work on me."

"The wretch."

"Miss Bellwood is slight and not very strong, but divining his purpose, she was suddenly endowed with superhuman strength. She shrieked for him to let go, literally dragging him about the stage in her frenzy to break away and save me."

"By Jove! that was thrilling!"

"Of course, the audience thought it in the play, and the people were simply spellbound by what they regarded as a most realistic bit of acting."

"It's not often anything like that is seen on the stage."

"No. Finally, with a mighty effort, Miss Bellwood broke away. When he tried to grasp her again, she caught up the axe and threatened to brain him with it."

"A good picture—a great situation."

"She was in earnest. She has told me since that she came within a hair of making her threat good. If he had made another move to catch her, it is certain she would have opened his head with the axe."

"Go on!"

"He slunk off, and she lost not a moment in setting me free. The saw was touching my hair with its teeth when I rolled off the log."

"A close call."

"All of that. After the show, Lockwell disappeared, but he left word that I would hear from him again. He swore he would find a way to do me up."

"Look her, Mr. Merriwell, have you used this affair to boom your business?"

"Used it?"

"Yes."

"No."

"You should."

"How?"

"Why, it is a corking story for the papers, and every paper in town will snap it up. It is sensational. Work it, Mr. Merriwell! Have it written up, and I'll guarantee you a house to-morrow night. The people will turn out to see the hero who was so nearly murdered on the stage by a jealous rival. That's the stuff! You must get jealousy into it. Can't you make it out that Lockwell was in love with somebody who admired you—say Miss Bellwood? Why, if you are in this business to win money, as well as glory, you won't lose any opportunity to get a barrel of free advertising with the yarn."

Frank was dazed for the moment. At first he was repulsed by the thought of turning the yarn into an advertising story. As for the jealousy part, Lockwell had attempted to pay attentions to Elsie, and had been rebuffed. All that would be perfectly true in the story.

But he thought of Elsie. It would expose the fact that they were great friends.

What did he care? He was proud of it. If Elsie did not care, it would be all right.

He would consult her. To avert the frost, she might agree to have the story in the papers.

"It will be all the more effective because Lockwell has been here and tried to injure you by circulating false reports," said the box office man. "You must show him up. You must show how he is trying to do you dirt. Then the people will turn out in swarms to see your play and get a look at you and the little heroine who saved you. Why, it's the greatest stuff I ever heard! It is worth barrels of money to you! You can draw a house on it anywhere."

"I don't know but you are right," said Frank, meditatively.

"Right! Of course I am! Now you go straight home and work the story up. Don't give it to one reporter, for he'll try to make it exclusive for his paper. Spring it on all of them, and if you do not do a land office business here for the next two nights I'm a lobster!"

"Mr. Henshaw," said Frank, grasping the young man's hand, "I believe you have done

us a good turn by the suggestion. I will try it."

CHAPTER VIII.

A SUDDEN SALE OF SEATS.

Frank came dashing back to the hotel, his face showing his excitement. He started for his room, but chanced to come face to face with Folansbee once more.

"I have it!" laughed Merry, triumphantly.

"Hey?" drawled the manager, in surprise.

"Have what?"

"The idea."

"What idea?"

"The one that will make our engagement here a winner."

Folansbee brightened a bit, but shook his head.

"I'm afraid it's too late for that," he said.

"Not a bit of it. We may not have a house to-night, but there'll be standing room to-morrow night if I put it in the Sun and only by the time the curtain rises to-morrow night."

The manager was aroused by Frank's cheerful prediction, but still he could not understand how such a miracle could be brought about.

"What's the marvelous idea?" he asked.

"Wait. You shall know later. Stay here. Keep near till I come down from my room. I want you to help carry the thing through."

"All right, dear boy. You can be sure I'll stay if there is any chance to make a go of this blooming business."

"There is every chance."

It seemed to Folansbee that Frank was far too sanguine, and yet he remembered that almost everything Merry had predicted since starting on the road had come true. Certain it was that Frank had some kind of a scheme on hand, something that he firmly believed would pull them out a winner.

Up the stairs Merry bounded. He found Elsie's room and rapped on her door. She called "come in," and he entered.

"Oh, isn't it too bad!" exclaimed Elsie.

"Mr. Folansbee has told us all about it. And

Lockwell did it! Frank, that man is a wretch!"

"All of that, little girl," agreed Merry; "but it may not be as bad as it seems."

"Why, are the tickets selling?"

"Not one of them."

"Then——"

"I have a scheme."

"Oh!"

Her face brightened. She had the utmost confidence in Frank's schemes, and she saw that he was hopeful now.

"Tell me what it is," she urged.

"I have a story that will pack the house to-morrow night if I put it in the Sun and Star. The papers will be glad to get it, too."

"Then you will put it in?"

"That depends on you."

"Me?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"You are the principal character in the story."

"Goodness!"

Elsie was surprised.

"I must have your consent to put the story in the papers. I would not think of doing such a thing, little girl, if it were not that we are facing a frost here, and something desperate must be done to bring out the people to see us."

"What is the story, Frank? Is it a—a—a fake?"

"No; it is true."

Now Elsie was more than interested.

"And I am in it?"

"Yes. That is why I have come to ask you about it. I am sure that, at first, you will revolt against having it published in the papers, but you realize it is a desperate case. We must do something to raise the wind. If you can suppress your sensitiveness enough not to mind the story, we will win out here."

Elsie's interest was at the highest pitch now. She caught him by the arm, eagerly commanding him to tell all about the story.

Frank did so. He explained the whole matter to her, watching her grow pale and then flush to the roots of her hair, only to

How Can We Afford To Give Such Premiums For Three Coupons And A Two Cent Stamp?

grow pale again and remain thus till he had finished.

"If it is necessary to do this in order to draw an audience," she said, when she had heard all he had to say, "go ahead and do it without delay."

"Spoken like my little sweetheart!" he cried, catching her in his arms and kissing her.

Then Frank hastened to his own room and began work on that story. He was enthusiastic over it, for he saw the possibilities of making it a "red hot sensation." He did not leave out any thrills, and yet he told it in a style that no paper could find objectionable. He did not name Lockwell, but simply called him "Blank, the jealous actor." He explained how Lockwell had tried to injure the show in Kansas City by circulating false reports about it. This was his introduction, and then he went about telling why Lockwell had resorted to such a contemptible trick.

When it was finished, Frank read it over to make corrections and put it in shape.

There was a knock on the door as he was reading it, and Elsie entered at his call. He read it to her, and she was forced to confess that it was like a piece out of a thrilling novel. She pronounced it all right, and then Frank went away to find Folansbee.

The man was walking restlessly up and down the office, smoking a cigar.

"Well, Merriwell," he said, "how has your idea panned out?"

"Great!" cried Merry, thrusting the manuscript at him. "Here it is!"

"What?"

"This is it. Take it to a professional copyist and have a dozen typewritten copies made of it."

"Is that all? Why——"

"Then you are to go before a notary public and swear to its truthfulness, if necessary."

"Whew!" whistled the backer of the show. "What is all this?"

"The story that will give us full houses after to-night."

"A story?"

"Yes."

"And I am to swear it is true?"

"You needn't hesitate. It is true, as you will discover on reading it."

"What am I to do after——"

"Get it into every Kansas City paper, the Sun in particular."

"What if they refuse to use it?"

"They won't."

"Some may."

"Then get it in if you have to nail down the hard cash to have it run as a reading ad-

vertisement, but be sure that it is placed in the regular news columns, with news matter on both sides of it. Get it in somehow—anyhow. That's all. If it doesn't win us good business, I'll eat my hat! Go."

Folansbee went. From Frank he was beginning to learn the necessity of hustling, and he surprised himself in this instance.

That afternoon there was a rehearsal. Before entering the theatre by the stage entrance, Frank appeared at the box office.

"Any tickets sold yet?" he asked.

"Not one," was the answer.

"That's tough!" laughed Frank.

"Have you considered my suggestion?" asked Renshaw.

"Yes, and acted on it."

"You've worked the story up?"

"Sure thing."

"That's right, I hope you have made it a good one."

"I've done my best on it. If it isn't good, I can't make a good one, that's all. I am greatly obliged to you for the suggestion."

"Don't mention it. It didn't cost me anything, and it may be worth a heap to you."

The rehearsal was dull and spiritless, for the company was dejected, having heard the bad reports. Frank decided not to tell them about the story that was to appear in the papers.

Midway in the rehearsal, Folansbee came sauntering in, looking well satisfied.

"What luck?" asked Frank.

"All right."

"You hit 'em?"

"Every one. I'll guarantee the story appears in every paper to-morrow, if it misses any of them to-night."

This was satisfactory to Merriwell, and, after listening to Folansbee's story of his work in getting at the papers, he complimented him heartily.

"It is plain to me that you are learning to get a move on," he said. "Your friends won't know you when you get back to St. Louis."

Somehow, after rehearsal, Frank felt like going round to the box office again, with the forlorn hope that at least a few seats had been sold. He did so.

"How many seats have you sold?" he asked, with a laugh.

"Five hundred," answered Mr. Renshaw.

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Merry. "Won't you cut that down a little, say about four hundred and ninety-nine?"

"Not a blessed one," declared the man in the box office. "I am not joking. I have sold just five hundred tickets, and I've got the cold cash for them, too."

It Was Terrible When Clif Was Hoisted Up that Old Flag Pole—True Blue No. 30.

Frank was ready to drop. Even then he could not believe it.

"Why, it isn't possible!" he cried.

"It's true, Mr. Merriwell. I sold them in a lump."

"In a lump?"

"To one man."

"One man! Why, it can't be anybody is going to be foolish enough to try to speculate on those tickets?"

"I should say not! He took the poorest seats in the house!"

It was not remarkable that Frank's astonishment increased apace.

"The poorest seats?" he cried. "Why should anybody do that?"

"So you could have the better ones for sale and not have to turn anybody who desired a good seat away. That was what he said."

"Look here!" exclaimed Frank. "Who was this lunatic who did such a thing?"

"I don't know," answered Renshaw. "He was an old man with white hair and beard, a marble face, the keenest eyes I ever saw, and a roll of bills as big as your leg."

"My father!" gasped Frank.

CHAPTER IX.

A REMARKABLE AUDIENCE.

That night the theatre was filled with the strangest audience that ever gathered to see a traveling show in Kansas City. It was an audience made up of beardless young men and jolly boys, together with a large number of girls of all ages from ten to nineteen. They came pouring in in pairs and flocks, and all seemed supplied with tickets, so it was not necessary for them to approach the box office.

Early in the evening the strange white-haired man had called again at the box office and taken four hundred tickets more. This time he was accompanied by eight young men, to whom he gave five fifty tickets each, instructing them to distribute them hastily but judiciously among their particular friends and acquaintances. The young men departed in a hurry, and the strange old man walked down the steps and disappeared, something like a grim smile of satisfaction on his marble face.

Of course some tickets were sold to people who came for them, and thus it came about that the theatre was well filled that night before it was time for the curtain to go up.

That it was a rather noisy audience must be admitted. There was a great amount of chattering and laughter. Amid the chatter-

ing the name of Frank Merriwell passed from lip to lip. Here and there were young fellows and even young girls who were telling their interested friends all the things they had heard about Frank Merriwell. Enthusiasm began to run pretty high before the orchestra came out and prepared to play. It was plain the youthful audience was having hard work to hold itself in check.

The orchestra played a lively piece, and the curtain went up with a rush. The play was on, and the audience soon began to show interest in it. But it was plain that everyone was waiting for something—waiting for somebody.

Shortly after the curtain went up a tall, marble-faced man, with white hair and beard, entered the right hand proscenium box. His appearance caused a stir, and then there was a great clapping of hands all over the house. As there was nothing in the play to bring applause just then, everyone knew it was meant for the man in the box, Mr. Phenix, of Arizona. He stepped to the front, looked over the sea of youthful faces with his keen eyes, and then there came a strange look to his usually immobile face. He smiled a smile of genuine pleasure.

By his will and his generosity all these young people had gathered here to see and hear the play—to see and hear Frank Merriwell. And this was the man who had talked of his own selfishness!

Mr. Phenix retired and sat down where he could watch the stage.

Ephraim Gallup came on and quickly caught the fancy of the house, as he had on his previous appearances. His song provoked such shouts of genuine youthful merriment as had never before been heard in that theatre.

Ephraim was happy. Playing to such an audience, he felt perfectly at home, and no Yankee comedian on the American stage could have done the part better.

But the comedians were gone, and the lines and action indicated that the star of the piece was to enter. Then there was a great hush, as if every person in that theatre were holding his or her breath.

It came! At the proper moment, dressed in his picturesque Western rig, Frank came bounding on the stage.

Then what happened actually bewildered him. As one being that audience rose and greeted him with wild, ringing youthful yells. Boys and young men waved hats and caps, while girls stood on the seats and fluttered their handkerchiefs and added their shrill voices to the uproar of sound.

What was the Queerest Scene Cliff Ever Witnessed in His Eventful Life? True Blue No. 30.

And over in the right hand proscenium box sat a white-haired man down whose marble face tears were running, running, running, while he, who had not laughed before for years, now laughed aloud.

Frank, feeling his heart swelling in his bosom, yet wondering at it all, advanced and bowed. Oh, how they shouted and yelled! It was as if the youth before them had been the greatest hero of the time.

Who can say that, to those youthful hearts, at least, he was not?

It was a long time before the audience quieted down. When it did, a boy in the front balcony shrilly screamed:

"We all knows yer, Frank Merriwell! You bet yer life we've heard of youse, an' you're all right. Yell, fellers, yell!"

They did yell once more.

And they would not be contented till Frank had said something to them.

"My young friends," said Merry, his voice shaking with the emotion he could not repress, "this is one of the happiest moments of my life, and it has come to me as a great surprise. All this is unexpected. This morning I had reasons to believe there would be a very slim house here to-night. Until after rehearsal this afternoon I had reasons to believe so, for, besides the complimentaries and bill board tickets, not a single seat had been sold. After rehearsal I learned that five hundred seats had been sold to one man. I know that man," turning to the silent, white-haired figure in the box. 'He bought four hundred seats more, and he brought this audience together some way. I thank him. This is the kind of an audience I had rather play before, young men, boys and girls. I feel that I can get nearer you and your real feelings than I could if you were older. This reception is one I can never forget. I shall cherish it in my memory. And to-night I believe all of us in the cast will play 'John Smith' better than we have ever played it before."

Then there was another wild burst of enthusiasm, but the play proceeded at last.

Indeed, never before had it been played as well. At the end of the third act Frank and Elsie received call after call till at last it was absolutely necessary to decline to heed the continued applause.

In the right hand proscenium box sat a figure that was immovable as stone. Only those bright eyes followed every motion and movement of Frank Merriwell.

But when Frank rushed to that box after the play was over, the strange man was gone.

The morning papers were full of the accounts of the remarkable audience that attended the first presentation of "John Smith of Montana" in that city. They gave a description of the remarkable reception Frank Merriwell had received on appearing before the footlights. This they explained by telling that he was the Merriwell who had been connected with Yale athletics and was more widely known among the young people of the country than any other living person. The strange man who had caused the gathering of such an audience was spoken of, also, and there was much speculation about him. Added to this was the story Frank had prepared for the papers, and the people of Kansas City were literally agog with excitement and eagerness to see Frank Merriwell and Elsie Bellwood. The rush on the box office began the moment it was opened that day, and it was plain that it would not be necessary for one man to buy out the house and distribute tickets gratis in order to turn out an audience that night.

In the midst of it all Frank Merriwell was shut away in his room, where, with an aching and regretful heart, he perused this note:

"My Dear Boy:

"When this reaches you I shall have left Kansas City. I feel that I must go away. Why I must go I do not know. A strange influence, a hidden power, governs and controls me. I know you; you are my son. I am proud of you. I have money, but I shall not give it to you—now. I wish you to continue the work you have begun—the work of winning your own way to fame and fortune. If you had plenty of money, you might give it up. I say you might; I do not think you really would, but there is the possibility. Sometime, I hope, we shall meet again, and then I will tell you all of my strange life that you do not know. Till then I bid you God speed.
Your Father."

THE END.

The next number (140) of the Tip Top Weekly will contain "Frank Merriwell's College Chums; or, Bart Hodge's Wonderful Shot," by the author of "Frank Merriwell."

TIP TOP WEEKLY

"AN IDEAL PUBLICATION FOR THE AMERICAN YOUTH"

NEW YORK, DECEMBER 10, 1898.

Terms to Tip Top Weekly Mail Subscribers.

(POSTAGE FREE.)

3 months - - - - -	65c.	One year - - - - -	\$2.50
4 months - - - - -	85c.	2 copies one year - - - - -	4.00
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HOW TO SEND MONEY.—By post office or express money order registered letter, bank check or draft, at your risk. At your own risk if sent by postal note, currency, coin, or postage stamps in ordinary letter.

RECEIPTS.—Receipt of your remittance is acknowledged by proper change of number on your label. If not correct you have not been properly credited, and should let us know at once.

TO CLUB RAISERS.—Upon request we will send sample copies to aid you in obtaining subscribers. All letters should be addressed to

STREET & SMITH'S TIP TOP WEEKLY.
81 Fulton St., New York City.

APPLAUSE.

The suggestion made by Mr. Lynn Hartley seems to have met with the immediate approval of the readers of the Tip Top Weekly, and, as already stated in these columns, we have made arrangements with the leading manufacturer of badges, and we will soon be prepared to supply the demands of our readers. An announcement of this feature will soon be made. The readers whose names are given below have written us on this matter enthusiastically, and shown an interest in the success of the Tip Top which is much appreciated:

Emil Koehler, Lansing, Mich.
Walter W. Pierce, Arkadelphia, Ark.
Theo. Abramson, Moline, Ill.
Harold Provost, Bridgeport, Conn.
Charles Murray, Bridgeport, Conn.
Fred Glenn, Bridgeport, Conn.
George Rivers, Bridgeport, Conn.
Thomas Kenney, Bridgeport, Conn.
F. H. Holbrook, Bridgeport, Conn.
Martin Kenney, Bridgeport, Conn.
Central Junior and Tan Yard Tiger Clubs, Knoxville, Tenn.
C. C. Rozzetta, Atlanta, Ga.
E. F. Smith, Atlanta, Ga.
B. M. S., Monroe, La.
M. E. Grant, Alleghany, Pa.
Chas. H. Iams, Harrisville, W. Va.
Will Mather, Harrisville, W. Va.
Hervey Showatte, Harrisville, W. Va.
Fred Foster, Harrisville, W. Va.
C. B. Mouts, Harrisville, W. Va.
Earl Pierpoint, Harrisville, W. Va.
C. Braden, Harrisville, W. Va.
B. W. Morris, Harrisville, W. Va.
J. Gatrell, Harrisville, W. Va.
J. B. Friederick, Harrisville, W. Va.
Vance L. Snodgrass, Harrisville, W. Va.
David S. Freemark, Philadelphia, Pa.
George K. White, Philadelphia, Pa.
W. J. Grush, New Orleans, La.

We, the undersigned members of the Yale Combine, have been reading the Tip Top and think it fine. We hope that Frank Merriwell's career as an actor will be as bright as his railroad life, and that Bart Hodge and Jack Diamond will be introduced into the Tip Top again. Yours truly,

LYNN SLOTTER, Pres.
LANCASTER THATCHER, Sec.
ARLIN RICE, Treas.
CARL YCHACOLL.

Frankfort, Ind.

You will be sure to find Frank's career as an actor bright and interesting. Bart Hodge and Jack Diamond will be soon heard from again.

Accept my congratulations on the success of the Tip Top Weekly.

I should like to see Frank return to Yale and take his old place as the leader in athletics. He is the ideal of all that is noble and good. I hope he meets his old college chums soon, Browning, Diamond,

Rattleton, Hodge, Pierson, Creighton and others; also his girl friends. I should like to have Frank meet Elsie and marry her, for I think she is a truer and better friend than Inza. Hoping that Tip Top has a long life, I remain, very respectfully yours,

WILLIAM C. ROBINS, Whiteport, N. Y.

Your congratulations are accepted and appreciated. You will certainly find Frank back at Yale again soon with his old college chums, and, as you know, he is not likely to "take a back seat" in athletics. The order enclosed in your letter will be promptly filled, the more so because it was written on a separate sheet of paper. Separate letters should always be written for "Applause," "Correspondence" or "Order" departments, though they may be inclosed in one envelope.

I write concerning the Tip Top Weekly, the best boys' paper ever published. I have run a news stand for some time, and have access to a great number of libraries, but I like Tip Top the best.

I have made a record for myself in athletics, and I believe it was through Frank's advice that I was so successful. I am the president of an athletic club, and the boys asked me to write you and tell you how they all thank you for giving them such a fine paper. Yours,

B. B.

Des Moines, Iowa.

We are pleased to learn that you have profited by Frank's advice, and that you have made such a good record in athletics. Any time that you are able to give to the physical development of the body will be well spent.

As I have read from No. 1 to date, I am very anxious about Frank's welfare. I think, and so do all the boys, that Tip Top heads the list of boys' libraries, with Diamond Dick, Jr., next. Kindly enlighten me on the following: Can you give me (about) the number in which Frank goes back to Yale? If I came over to 81 Fulton Street, could I buy Friday's book on about Tuesday or Wednesday? Awaiting your reply, I remain, yours sincerely,

FRANK W., Brooklyn, N. Y.

We are glad that you and such a host of readers praise the Tip Top so highly. As you continue to read them you will, we think, find that Frank has at least his share of success, and mainly because, whatever his experiences, he always tries to do what is right and perseveres in anything he undertakes. We cannot supply the Tip Top Weekly at our office before the day of publication. We do not issue a handbook on tumbling. A complete catalogue of our publications, including handbooks, will be sent to any address upon application.

Allow us to congratulate you on your wonderful weekly, Tip Top. We consider it our duty to thank you for many hours of pleasure which we have spent reading your books. We are glad to see Hans Dunderwats and Ephraim Gallup have turned up again, and we hope to hear of Frank's other friends again. Mr. Standish is the best writer of boys' stories. We hope to see Frank marry Inza Burrage, and wish everlasting luck to the Tip Top Weekly.

JOHN CLARK.
JOHN COFFEY.
GAY CALLAHAN.
JOSEPH M'MANUS.

Philadelphia, Pa.

Everybody seems to be of one opinion regarding Mr. Standish as a writer, and he says that the great number of letters from readers such as yours that have been read by him are very stimulating. He knows what he is writing about, and has a wealth of actual experiences yet to draw upon.

We have read all the Tip Tops issued up to the present time, and think them tip top. We hope some day to see Frank marry Inza, for we think she is far the nicest, but we do not want him to marry for a long time. We would like Frank to go back to Yale and meet his old friends. We will keep on reading them as long as they are printed. Wishing you success, we remain,

M. C. F. and D. B.

Montpelier, Idaho.

There are many readers who agree with you as to the attractive qualities possessed by Inza. Frank is not thinking of marriage at present, though he is fond of the girls. We thank you for your good wishes.

I have been reading the Tip Top Weekly from No. 1 to date, and I think they are all right. I am a baseball and football player myself, and I love both games. I have not seen my letter in your paper from Scranton, Pa., so I thought I would write and

It was Strange How Cliff Succeeded in that Experiment—True Blue No. 30.

let you know that we like Frank Merriwell here, too. Hope to see this in your paper. I will continue reading Tip Top as long as they are published.
LOUIS DAVIES, Scranton, Pa.

Your letter is only an additional proof that the interest in Frank Merriwell is widespread, and we are pleased to hear from you and to find that Scranton boys are lovers of good reading.

As I am a regular reader of Tip Top and Diamond Dick, I thought I would write you. If it is possible, I wish Frank and Diamond Dick to meet before Frank goes to college. All the boys want them to meet. I stay at a book store, and the boys wanted me to write you about it. Hoping to hear from you at once,
WILL ADAMS, Fitzgerald, Ga.

It is hardly possible for Frank and Diamond Dick to meet, as the scenes of their experiences are far apart, and their interests somewhat different. They have not as yet met each other.

I have read all of the issues of the Tip Top from No. 53 up, and I think that they are the best stories published. My brother wanted me to read A. Jesse James, but I would not, and mamma does not think that they are suitable for girls to read. I read the correspondence that is printed near the end of the weekly, and see that Frank is going back to Yale. I think that they (the stories) are better where he has to work, and not where he has such a "cinch." I will always be a constant reader of the Tip Top Weekly.
Miss J. A. J., Norwich, Conn.

We are always glad to hear from the girls and get their views of these stories. All tastes cannot, of course, be the same, but the Tip Top seems to please one and all. You must not think it is such a "cinch" for the college boys. It is not all play at Yale.

I have read your Tip Top Weekly from No. 47, and I think it is the only paper any boy should read. I hope Frank will drop Elsie Bellwood and get more fond of Inza. I would like to know if Nos. 32, 36 and 37 are in print. I remain, your constant reader,
JOHN CUFF, Watertown, N. Y.

All back numbers of this weekly are now in print. We can supply them or you may secure them from your newsdealer. We are glad to have your good opinion of the Tip Top.
Dear Sirs:

I would like to write a few lines, saying that the Tip Top is the only tip top paper out. As I was looking over the letters from your readers, I noticed the Lynn Hartley proposition of having a badge and password for the Tip Top readers, and I think it is a fine idea.

I also notice that the girls are interested, and when the girls are interested the boys are sure to be, don't you think so? I would like to read more letters from them.
IRVING H. MEEKS,
Rox, Mass.

You are quite right about the opinions of the girls, and now that you as well as we have expressed a wish to hear from more of them, we know they will respond at once. See elsewhere on this page item about badge and password.

We have read a great many of your Tip Top Weeklies, and are much interested in Frank's welfare; therefore we would like to ask a few questions about his future career. The first is, Will he ever go back on the railroad? Will he ever regain his fortune?
R. W. W. and G. F. H.

I have been a reader of the Tip Top for a long time, and hope to be a reader of it always, for it is a very fine paper. I hope that Frank will meet his father again and live with him, and I would be glad to hear of Frank getting his fortune back again. If only every boy would take Frank for a model! I know that if all would read Tip Top that there would be a big change in the American youth. I hope that after a while they all will. I can say that I have secured five readers for the Tip Top Weekly, and will do my best to add to this number. Frank is a good baseball player, and I would like him to be on the St. Louis Browns once and see if he could shake them up a little. I hardly think he could, but I would like to read about him trying it. I hope that Frank will meet with best of luck in his future life, and I hope that little Jack and Nell are doing good with their stand. Will the show that Frank is in come to St. Louis? If it does it will make all kinds of money. Hoping the Tip Top will last as long as I do, with good luck to Frank, I remain, your devoted reader,
F. D. D., St. Louis, Mo.

You are not too flattering in your reference to

Frank as a model, and we are glad to know that you and many other readers benefit by his example. Such efforts as you have made to secure readers for the Tip Top is a substantial proof of the interest you have in it and is much appreciated. Frank is fond of the game, but has so many irons in the fire that there is not much chance of his playing on the "St. Louis" nine. As to his appearing on the St. Louis stage, that will depend upon his theatrical engagements. That he would make money in that lively city is certain. We thank you for your good wishes.

R. W. W. and G. F. H.

Questions about Frank's future career can only be fully answered by the stories themselves as they appear. It is difficult to forecast the future at all times, and what pursuits Frank may follow will depend naturally upon circumstances. It is certain that Frank will never be satisfied to stand still. He is progressive, hopeful and enthusiastic as to a successful future.

We have read your Tip Top Library from No. 1 to date, and think it is the best weekly paper published.
ARTHUR HANSEN.
ROBERT KENNING.

Chicago, Ill.

We are glad that the Tip Top pleases you, and we hope ever to retain your good opinion of these stories, for it is Mr. Standish's intention to keep them fresh, lively and as attractive as he can make them. His heart and soul is in his work.

I have read the Tip Top Weekly almost since it was first published, and write to express my thanks to the author for the pleasant moments I have spent reading his stories. I hope Frank will go back to Yale, for it is a good place for a young gentleman. I and a friend have formed a club, and we are going to take this paper as long as it is published.
JAMES LEONARD and JOHN MULLEN,
Grand Forks, N. Dak.

Mr. Standish is pleased with your letter. We can all of us stand a good deal of praise where we feel that we are doing our best. This is a reward due persistent and conscientious effort. You will have noticed elsewhere on this page that Frank is soon to return to Yale.

In reading over the "Applause" in No. 132 I came across one written by Lynn Hartley which interested me very much. As I myself am a great reader of Tip Top, I think the plan of Lynn Hartley is very good, and when the members of our club had read it they all indorsed it at once. Herewith are the members of the club:

GEORGE F. MESSIMER, President.
ALBERT G. GOSTROCH, Treasurer.
IRVIN C. KEEL, Secretary.
WALTER HAMBRIGHT.
DARL PUGH.
JESSE CROFT.
CARL BAER.
FRANK NEBINGER.
HOWARD WHITMOYER.
WAYNE BELL.

Harrisburg, Pa.

Our correspondents should not expect to receive attention in the next issue after their letters reach us, for the old rule, "first come, first served," must be observed, and these columns are well filled, as will be noticed. There will be no great delay, however, and while waiting a reply read all the answers to other letters and you will find some of your questions answered. The first item on this page refers to the Lynn Hartley suggestion about which you write us.

With Clif Tied to it, the Belt Moved to the Fatal Saw. True Blue No. 30.

I have been a reader of the Tip Top Weekly since No. 8 was issued up to the present time, and I think it is fine. I believe every boy—and girls, too, for I am a girl—should read it and pattern after some of its characters. I hope if Frank ever marries he will marry Inza. Wishing to hear more of his Yale chums, BESSIE ROGERS, Newcomerstown, O.

You will hear more of Frank's Yale chums, and also learn of Cupid's tricks where Frank's affections are concerned, in future issues of the Tip Top. You are setting a good example. We want to hear from all the girls.

I have read your Tip Tops from No. 90 to the present one, and, although I sent for other publications and read them, I think there is nothing to hold a candle to "Frank Merriwell." What I like about your stories is that they are so real and lifelike, and do not contain the sensational incidents that are features of other publications. I am a member of a club here in town, and all the boys enjoy the Tip Top immensely. By the way, I'd like to ask a question of you through curiosity of myself and others. Is there anything that Frank Merriwell can't do? H. B. F., Wellington, Ohio.

We answer your question by saying that there is little that is impossible of accomplishment either for Frank or any other, if honest endeavor and a firm determination to win is the uppermost thought in his mind. The reason you find these stories so "real and lifelike" is that Mr. Standish writes of actual happenings and personal experiences. We hope he may long retain your good opinion.

I am a constant reader of the Tip Top Weekly, and think that it is a tip top paper, with a tip top fellow for a hero.

The stories have done me much good in pointing out to me the foolishness of spending so much money for things we do not need, and the talks on other subjects are very edifying. Mr. Standish does not seem to have a good opinion of Arkansas. If he will come to visit this State I think that he will change his opinion. Hoping that Frank Merriwell will long continue the hero of the Tip Top Weekly. C. R. Fayetteville, Ark.

You must not imagine because of Frank's unfortunate experiences in one instance that Mr. Standish has a bad opinion of Arkansas. He is not so narrow minded. There is both good and bad in once place as well as another, and doubtless Mr. Standish has a substantial credit side to his experiences in Arkansas. Your appreciation of his stories will serve to add to this.

We read the Frank Merriwell stories every week, and we know that they are "all right." We are very glad that the girls read Frank Merriwell stories, for it shows the stories must be of a very high standard. We are in favor of having a badge, and would suggest that they are given to the readers by the coupon system. Long live Frank Merriwell!

FRED CARTER.
JACK KIRBY.
JAMES GIBBS.

Rome, N. Y.

We agree with you boys that it is a compliment to the Tip Top that the stories have found such strong favor with the girls. Letters from parents have reached us to the same effect, and there is no doubt that there is a charm about Mr. Standish's stories that wins him a place in the hearts of all. You will read about the badge elsewhere on this page. Long life to the boys of Rome!

Correspondence.

W. C., Philadelphia, Pa.—We know of no premium on gold dollars.

W. U. T. Co., Syracuse, N. Y.—Frank will return to Yale very shortly.

Tired Willy, Allegheny, Pa.—Your propositions will receive due consideration.

A. A. L., Pullman, Ill.—There is no premium on any of the coins you mention.

C. R. S., Poughkeepsie, N. Y.—You can obtain road maps from the booksellers in your city.

A. V. B., Fitchburg, Mass.—Write to the American News Co., Chambers St., New York City.

J. L. H., McKinney, Texas.—Yes, you can obtain the Tip Top Weekly, Nos. 40 to 80, at five cents apiece. They are all in print.

Jack Diamond, Chicago, Ill.—No, we do not think that hard exercise will affect a boy's growth, but you must not carry matters to an excess.

New York Reader, New York City.—Write to Russell A. Alger, Secretary of War, Washington, D. C., and you will doubtless obtain the information you desire.

M. A. P., Chelsea, Mass.—Yes, we can furnish you with the books you desire. Write for catalogue.

F. K., Terre Haute, Ind.—Yes, you can obtain all the quarterlies of the Frank Merriwell series.

C. E., Chicago, Ill.—There is no need to worry. You will probably broaden as you grow older. We would recommend, however, dumbbell and Indian club exercise.

W. R. S., Fort Worth, Texas.—It would be scarcely fair to tell in advance everything that Frank Merriwell and his friends are going to do, but we think you will be satisfied.

H. E. H., Rochester, N. Y.—Send the first of your stories to the publishers you think most suitable with a letter stating your wishes. The Merriwell stories will run for a very long time, we hope and believe.

M. B. R., Danbury, Conn.—To make carmine ink, use best ground Brazil wood, four ounces; diluted acetic acid, one pint; alum, one-half ounce. Boil them slowly in a covered tinned copper or enameled sauce-pan for one hour, and add one ounce of gum.

J. J. B., Lynn, Mass.—The 1868 three-cent piece is worth about thirty cents. The Canada Jubilee stamp is not worth much more than its face value. Your Ulster County Gazette, dated 1890, telling about the death of George Washington, ought to command a price, but only from a collector.

R. U. F., Honesdale, Pa.—The Gulf Stream is the current which issues from the Gulf of Mexico and carries the heat of the Caribbean Sea across the northern Atlantic to the shores of Scotland and Norway. This tropical river flowing steadily through the cold water of the ocean, rescues England from the snows of Labrador. Should it, by any chance, break through the Isthmus of Panama, Great Britain would be condemned to eternal glaciers.

D. E. G., Buffalo, N. Y.—Fumigate the pigeon loft by means of sulphur, closing every crack and crevice, and then burning a small piece of that substance placed on a tin plate. Then whitewash the walls and ceiling, and do not allow the birds to enter until it is perfectly dried. If boxes are used, burn all the nests and fumigate with sulphur. A mixture of half flour and half sulphur rubbed in at the base of the feathers will kill any vermin on the live birds.

J. P. E., San Luis Obispo, Cal.—Up to the close of the fiscal year the increase of expenditures on account of the war with Spain was \$43,041,732 for the War Department and \$24,262,438 for the Navy Department. For July, August, September and October, 1898, expenditures of the War Department were \$107,520,368, being \$81,613,131 greater than for the same months in 1897. For the same months this year, the Navy Department expended \$27,459,577, which was \$16,014,926 more than it spent in the like period in 1897. Up to October 31, the war with Spain added to the disbursements of these two departments the sum of \$164,932,228. It is impossible to predict who will be nominated for President in 1900. Your handwriting and grammar are both good.

What Was That Double Championship of the Naval Cadet? See True Blue No. 30.

Tip Top Quarterly.

AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHY.

The earlier issues of Tip Top Weekly are now on sale in the form of Quarterlies, each including 13 consecutive issues of this favorite weekly, together with the 13 original illuminated illustrations, and an elegant cover in colors. The price is 50 Cents per volume, for which sum they will be sent by mail post-paid to and address in the United States.

- - NOW READY. - -

No. 3.	"	Nos. 27 to 39 of Tip Top Weekly.
No. 4.	"	Nos. 40 to 52 of Tip Top Weekly.
No. 5.	"	Nos. 53 to 65 of Tip Top Weekly.
No. 6.	"	Nos. 66 to 78 of Tip Top Weekly.
No. 7.	"	Nos. 79 to 91 of Tip Top Weekly.

Nos. 1 and 2 out of print.

If your Newsdealer has not got the Quarterlies, remit direct to the publishers,

STREET & SMITH, 81 Fulton St., N. Y.

WRESTLING.

History tells us that wrestling was the first form of athletic pastime. Without doubt, it gives strength and firmness, combined with quickness and pliability, to the limbs, vigor to the body, coolness and discrimination to the head and elasticity to the temper, the whole forming an energetic combination of the greatest power to be found in man. The book is entitled PROFESSOR MULDOON'S WRESTLING. It is fully illustrated, and will be sent postpaid on receipt of ten cents. Address

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This book is a guide to success in life, embracing Principles of Business, Choice of Pursuit, Buying and Selling, General Management, Mechanical Trades, Manufacturing, Bookkeeping, Causes of Success and Failure, Business Maxims and Forms, etc. It also contains an appendix of complete business forms and a dictionary of commercial terms. No young man should be without this valuable book. It gives complete information about trades, professions and occupations in which any young man is interested. Price ten cents. Address

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Complete instructions for playing many of the most popular out-door games is found in this book. The games are illustrated and very easily mastered. Price ten cents. Address

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(Manual Library Department).

Princeton, Harvard, Yale or "Pennsy?"

AN ACCURATE
PICTURE OF
THE BADGE
WILL APPEAR
HERE
NEXT WEEK

Which is your favorite college? Which football team do you favor? Do you want to wear a badge with the colors and name of the college of your choice?

We have selected for our new premiums four badges, each surmounted by an American Eagle, and bearing the name of one of the above colleges pendant from a ribbon composed of the correct college colors—a very pretty badge, and one that will, we are sure, give satisfaction to our readers.

READ HOW YOU CAN GET IT!

We publish four 32-page, illuminated cover weeklies for boys, retailing for five cents each, as follows:

The True Blue, The Nick Carter Weekly,
The Tip Top Weekly, The Diamond Dick, Jr.

We wish the readers of one series to become acquainted with the entire line. On and after the present date the coupon at the foot of this column will be printed in each one of the above-mentioned publications. Three coupons, each clipped from a different publication, mailed to our office, accompanied by a two-cent stamp, will entitle you to this premium, sent to your address, post-paid, free of all expense.

When sending, state whether you wish a Princeton, Harvard, Yale or University of Pennsylvania badge. You can secure as many as you desire, provided you send sufficient coupons and stamps, provided each of the set of three is from a different publication.

Send in your coupons. Remember this is a purely gratuitous gift on our part, intended to call your attention to others of our publications besides the ones you are now purchasing. If you cannot procure what you desire from your newsdealer, send us twelve cents and one coupon, and we will send you by return mail a copy of two other publications and the badge. Address your coupons to

STREET & SMITH'S PREMIUM DEPT. 81 Fulton Street New York.

This offer first appears in No. 139 Tip Top, No. 113 Diamond Dick, No. 30 True Blue, and No. 102 Nick Carter.

The WAR-GRAPE coupons previously published in these weeklies will be accepted for badges provided you so request when sending in, and comply with the conditions as given above.

TIP TOP WEEKLY COUPON.

This coupon, accompanied by two others, each from a different one of the following publications: Nick Carter Weekly, Diamond Dick, Jr., or True Blue, entitle the sender to the premium we offer, if a two cent stamp is also enclosed to pay for postage and packing.

STREET & SMITH.

CATALOGUE OF FRANK MERRIWELL STORIES IN TIP TOP WEEKLY

1. Frank Merriwell; or, First Days at Fardale.
2. Frank Merriwell's Foe; or, "Plebe" Life in Barracks.
3. Frank Merriwell's Medal; or, "Plebe" Life in Camp.
4. Frank Merriwell's Rival; or, By Fair Play or Foul.
5. Frank Merriwell's Fault; or, False Steps and Foul Snafes.
6. Frank Merriwell's Frolics; or, Fun at Fardale.
7. Frank Merriwell's Mysterious Ring; or, The Man in Black.
8. Frank Merriwell's Fag; or, Fighting for the Weak.
9. Frank Merriwell's Furlough; or, The Mystery of the Old Mansion.
10. Frank Merriwell on His Mettle; or, Field Day at Fardale.
11. Frank Merriwell's Fate; or, The Old Sailor's Legacy.
12. Frank Merriwell's Motto; or, The Young Life Savers.
13. Frank Merriwell in New York; or, An Unknown Foe.
14. Frank Merriwell in Chicago; or, Meshed by Mysteries.
15. Frank Merriwell in Colorado; or, Trapping the Train Wreckers.
16. Frank Merriwell in Arizona; or, Mysteries of the Mine.
17. Frank Merriwell in Mexico; or, The Search for the Silver Palace.
18. Frank Merriwell in New Orleans; or, The Queen of Flowers.
19. Frank Merriwell's Mercy; or, The Phantom of the Everglades.
20. Frank Merriwell's Friend; or, Muriel the Moonshiner.
21. Frank Merriwell's Double; or, Fighting for Life.
22. Frank Merriwell Meshed; or, The Last of the Danites.
23. Frank Merriwell's Fairy; or, The Hermit of Yellowstone Park.
24. Frank Merriwell's Money; or, The Queen of the "Queer" Makers.
25. Frank Merriwell's Mission; or, The Mystic Valley of the Andes.
26. Frank Merriwell's Mysterious Foe; or, Wild Life on the Pampas.
27. Frank Merriwell a Monarch; or, The King of Phantom Island.
28. Frank Merriwell in Gorilla Land; or, The Search for the Missing Link.
29. Frank Merriwell's Magic; or, The Pearl of Tangier.
30. Frank Merriwell in France; or, The Mystery of the Masked Unknown.
31. Frank Merriwell's Feat; or, The Queen of the Bull Fighters.
32. Frank Merriwell in London; or, The Grip of Doom.
33. Frank Merriwell's Venture; or, Driven from Armenia.
34. Frank Merriwell in India; or, Hunting Human Leopards.
35. Frank Merriwell's Vow; or, After Big Game in Ceylon.
36. Frank Merriwell in Japan; or, The Sign of Avenger.
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